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AN

ACCOUNT

OF

TRAVELS

INTO THE

INTERIOR OF SOUTHERN AFRICA,

IN THE YEARS 1797 AND 1798:

INCLUDING

CURSORY OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

GEOLOGY AND GEOGRAPHY OF THE SOUTHERN PART OF THAT CONTINENT; THE NATURAL HISTORY OF SUCH OBJECTS AS OCCURRED IN THE ANIMAL, VEGETABLE, AND MINERAL KINGDOMS;

AND

SKETCHES ON THE PHYSICAL AND MORAL CHARACTERS OF THE VARIOUS TRIBES OF INHABITANTS SURROUNDING THE SETTLEMENT OF THE

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

A DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENT STATE, POPULATION AND PRODUCE OF THAT EXTENSIVE COLONY;

WITH

A MAP,

CONSTRUCTED ENTIRELY FROM ACTUAL OBSERVATIONS,

MADE IN THE COURSE OF THE TRAVELS.

BY JOHN BARROW,

Late Secretary to the Earl of Macartney, and Auditor-General of Public Accounts at the Cape of Good Hope.

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

HENRY DUNDAS,

ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE,

UNDER WHOSE AUSPICES, THE EXTENSIVE AND IMPORTANT COLONY OF

THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

WAS ACQUIRED AND ANNEXED TO THE BRITISH EMPIRE,

BY WHICH OUR POLITICAL AND COMMERCIAL INTERESTS IN THE EAST-INDIES HAVE BEEN SECURED AND PROMOTED;

THESE SKETCHES,

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

HIS MOST FAITHFUL

AND OBLIGED HUMBLE SERVANT,

JOHN BARROW.

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From this chart it appears, that the extent and dimensions of the territory composing the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, now permanently fixed, are as follows:

Length from west to east.

	Miles.
Cape Point to Kaffer Land, - -	580
River Koussie to Zuureberg, - -	520

Breadth from south to north.

River Koussie to Cape Point, - -	315
Nieuwveldt Mountains to Plettenberg's Bay,	160
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which gives a parallelogram whose mean length is 550, and mean breadth 233, English miles, comprehending an area of 128,150 square miles. This great extent of country, deducting the population of Cape Town, is peopled by about 15,000 white inhabitants, so that each individual might possess eight and a half square miles of ground. A very great portion, however, of this territory may be considered as an unprofitable waste, unfit for any sort of culture, or even to be employed as pasture for the support of cattle. Level plains, consisting of a hard impenetrable surface of clay, thinly sprinkled over with crystalized sand, condemned to perpetual drought, and producing only a few straggling tufts of acrid, saline, and succulent plants, and chains of vast mountains that are either totally naked, or clothed in parts with sour grasses only, or such plants as are noxious to animal life, compose at least one half of the colony of the Cape. These chains of mountains and the interjacent plains are extended generally in the direction of east and west,

except indeed that particular range which, beginning at False Bay, opposite to the Cape Point, stretches to the northward along the western coast as far as the mouth of Olifant's river, which is about 210 miles.

The first great chain of mountains that runs east and west incloses, between it and the southern coast, an irregular belt of land from twenty to sixty miles in width, indented by several bays, covered with a deep and fertile soil, intersected by numerous streamlets well clothed with grass and small arboreous or fruitescent plants, well wooded in many parts with forest trees, supplied with frequent rains, and enjoying, on account of its proximity to the sea, a more mild and equable temperature than the more remote and interior parts of the colony.

The next great chain is the Zevarte Berg or Black Mountain. This is considerably more lofty and rugged than the first, and consists in many instances of double and sometimes treble ranges. The belt inclosed between it and the first chain is about the mean width of that between the first and the sea; of a surface very varied, composed in some parts of barren hills, in others of naked arid plains of clay, known to the natives, and also to the colonists, by the name of *Karroo*; and in others of choice patches of well watered and fertile grounds. The general surface of this belt has a considerable elevation above that of the first; the temperature is less uniform; and from the nature of the soil, as well as the difficulty of access over the mountains, which are passable only in few places, this district is much less valuable than the other.

The third range of mountains is the Nieuwveldt's Gebergte, which, with the second, grasps the Great

Karroo or arid desert, uninhabited by a human creature. This desert, making the third step or terrace of Southern Africa, is greatly elevated above the second; is near 300 miles in length from east to west, and eighty in breadth; is scarcely ever moistened by a shower of rain; exhibits a surface of clay, thinly sprinkled over with sand, out of which a few shrivelled and parched plants here and there meet the eye, faintly extending their half withered fibres along the ground, and struggling, as it were, to preserve their existence against the excessive heat of one season of the year, and the severe frosts of the other.

The country likewise ascends from the western coast towards the interior in successive terraces, of which the most elevated, called the Roggeveld, falls in with the last-mentioned chain of mountains, the Nieuwveldt. The whole tract of country to the northward of the Cape is much more sandy, barren, and thinly inhabited, than to the eastward, in which direction it increases in beauty and fertility with the distance.

Such is the general outline of the territory that is comprehended under the name of the Cape of Good Hope. It is divided into four districts, over each of which is placed a civil magistrate called a *Landrost*, who, with six *Hemraaden*, or a council of country burghers, is vested with powers to regulate the police of his district, superintend the affairs of government, adjust litigations, and determine petty causes. Their decisions, however, are subject to an appeal to the Court of Justice in Cape Town. The four districts are; that of the Cape; of Stellenbosch and Drakensteen; of Zwellendam; and of Graaff Reynet; and they were successively colonized in the order here mentioned.

The Cape district is chiefly composed of that mountainous peninsula whose southern extremity was first called by Portugueze navigators *Cabo dos Tormentos*, or, Cape of Storms, on account of the very tempestuous weather often and long experienced by them in their attempts to double it, which, when effected, they changed to that of *Cape of Good Hope*. The Table Mountain, flanked by the Devil's Hill on the east, and the Lion's Head on the west, forms the northern extremity of the same peninsula. The length from north to south is about 36, and breadth 8, miles. It is composed, properly speaking, of one mountain, broken indeed into several masses more or less connected by inferior gorges. Some of these masses have horizontal summits; others peaked or cone-shaped; some consist of naked fragments of rock, others are clothed with verdure. This peninsula is connected with the continent by a low flat isthmus, with few irregularities of surface, except such as are made by ridges of sand that seem to have been adventitiously brought thither by the strong south-east winds from the shores of False Bay, a large arm of the sea inclosed between the Cape Promontory and a chain of high mountains on the continent to the east ward of it.

False Bay, and Table Bay, the one washing the southern, and the other the northern, shore of the isthmus, are the usual places of resort for shipping trading to, or calling for refreshments at, the Cape of Good Hope. During the summer season, when the south-east winds are predominant, which may be reckoned in general from September till May, Table Bay affords the most secure shelter; and Simon's Bay, a cove or indent on the western shore of False Bay, for the rest of the year, when the northerly and north-westerly winds are strongest. In

neither of them is there any sort of security or convenience for heaving down and repairing shipping, nor do they appear to admit of any contrivance for such purposes at a moderate expense. The latitude of Table Bay is 33° 55′ south; longitude 18° 30′ east. Of Simon's Bay the latitude is 34° 9′ south, and longitude 18° 32′ east.

There are also two small bays on the west side of the peninsula, one called *Hout* or Wood Bay, and the other Chapman's Bay. The latter is exposed to the west and north-west, but the former is sheltered from all winds. The confined anchorage, which is said to admit of, at the utmost, ten ships only, and the eddy winds from the surrounding high mountains, which make it difficult for ships to enter and get out, are the objections that have been stated against the use of Hout Bay.

All these bays, the passes of the mountains, and indeed every part of the peninsula, are capable of being maintained, if properly garrisoned, against any attack that will probably be ever made against them. Most of the works, batteries, and lines, have undergone a complete repair, with many improvements; and others have been judiciously added, by the British engineers. The pass at the foot of Müisenberg, a steep high mountain, washed by False Bay, and the only road of communication between Simon's Bay and the Cape, may now be considered as impregnable, though the Dutch suffered themselves very easily to be driven out of it. It is the Thermopylæ of the Cape; and from the several breast-works, lately constructed along the heights, a *chosen band* of three hundred riflemen ought to stop the progress of an army.

Cape Town, the capital, and indeed the only assemblage of houses that deserves the name of a town in the colony, is pleasantly situated at the head of Table Bay, on a sloping plain that rises with an easy ascent to the feet of the Devil's Hill, the Table Mountain, and the Lion's Head, before mentioned; the last, stretching to the northward, in a long unbroken hill of moderate height, is King James's Mount (the Lion's Rump of the Dutch) and affords shelter against the westerly winds to ships in Table Bay. It most completely commands every part of the town and the castle to the north-east of it: and this, with the Amsterdam and Chavonne batteries, command the anchorage in the bay. The town, consisting of about eleven hundred houses, built with regularity and kept in neat order, is disposed into straight and parallel streets, intersecting each other at right angles. Many of the streets are open and airy, with canals of water running through them, walled in, and planted on each side with oaks; others are narrow and ill paved. Three or four squares give an openness to the town. In one is held the public market; another is the common resort of the peasantry with their waggons from the remote districts of the colony; and a third, near the shore of the bay, and between the town and the castle, serves as a parade for exercising the troops. This is an open, airy and extensive plain, perfectly level, composed of a bed of firm clay, covered with small hard gravel. It is surrounded by canals, or ditches, that receive the waters of the town and convey them into the bay. Two of its sides are completely built up with large and handsome houses. The barracks, originally intended for an hospital, for corn magazines, and wine cellars, is a large, well-designed, regular building, which, with its two wings, occupies part of one of the sides of the great

square. The upper part of this building is sufficiently spacious to contain 4000 men. The castle affords barracks for 1000 men, and lodgings for all the officers of one regiment; magazines for artillery stores and ammunition; and most of the public offices of government are within its walls. The other public buildings are a Calvinist and a Lutheran church; a guard-house, in which the Burgher Senate, or the council of burghers, meet for transacting business relative to the interior police of the town; a large building in which the government slaves, to the number of 330, are lodged; the court of justice, where civil and criminal causes are heard and determined. The basis of all the proceedings of this court is the Roman or civil law, tempered or corrected by local circumstances and unforeseen occurrences, as the nature of the cases may seem to require, and which are generally provided for in the code drawn up under the name of "Statutes of India," for the supreme court of Batavia and the other inferior settlements of the Dutch East India Company. A full court is composed of seven judges, by a majority of whose votes all causes are decided; subject, however, to an appeal to a court composed of the governor and lieutenant-governor, and from their decision to the King in council. The fiscal, or chief acting magistrate, is also the public accuser and attorney-general to prosecute, in all criminal cases, for the sovereign. The judges are none of them professional men, but are chosen out of the burghers of the town.

The Lombard Bank, to which is committed the management of a capital of about 600,000 rix dollars, lent by the old government in paper money to the subjects on mortgages of their lands and houses, or on moveable property, at an interest of 5 per cent.

is within the walls of the castle: as is also the *Weeskammer*, or Chamber for administering the affairs of orphans. The population of the town is estimated at about 6000 whites, inclusive of the military, and twelve thousand slaves.

Between the town and Table Mountain are scattered over the plain a number of neat houses surrounded by plantations and gardens. Of these the largest and nearest to the town is that in which the government house is erected. It is in length near 1000 yards, and contains about forty acres of rich land, divided into almost as many squares by oak hedges. The public walk runs up the middle, is well shaded by an avenue of oak trees, and inclosed on each side by a hedge of cut myrtles. The Dutch of late years had entirely neglected this excellent piece of ground; but the spirit of improvement that has always actuated the minds of the English in all their possessions abroad, will no doubt show itself at this place, and convert the public garden into a place not only ornamental to the town but useful to the country. A part of it, in fact, has already been appropriated, by order of the Earl of Macartney, for the reception of scarce and curious native plants, and for the trial of such Asiatic and European productions as may seem most likely to be cultivated with benefit to the colony.

Among the foreign productions that might be introduced, and in all probability cultivated with success at the Cape of Good Hope, may be reckoned the different varieties of the cotton plant. Many of these have been already tried, and found to succeed extremely well in the light sandy soil that generally prevails in the country. Two species of indigo grow wild in several parts of the colony; and

TRAVELS

INTO THE

INTERIOR OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

CHAP. I.

A General View of the Colony of The Cape, and a more particular Description of the Promontory called The Cape of Good Hope.

By the capture of the Cape of Good Hope and of Ceylon, the British language is now heard at the southern extremities of the four great continents or quarters of the globe. Three of these have submitted to the power of its arms; and the spirit of commerce and adventurous industry has directed the attention of its enterprising subjects to the fourth, on the small island of Staaten, at the extreme point of South America, where a kind of settlement has been formed for carrying on the southern whale-fishery. Of these extreme points the Cape of Good Hope cannot be considered as the least important, either with regard to its geographical situation, as favourable for carrying on a speedy intercourse with every part of the civilized world; or to its intrinsic value, as capable of supplying many articles of general consumption to the mother-country; or as a port solely for the numerous and valuable fleets of the East-India Company to refresh at; to assemble

in time of war for convoy; to re-establish the health of their sickly troops, worn down by the debilitating effects of exposure to a warm climate; and to season, in the mild and moderate temperature of Southern Africa, such of those from Europe as may be destined for service in the warmer climate of their Indian settlements.

In the early voyages undertaken by the British merchants trading to the East-Indies, the Cape was always made the general rendezvous and place of refreshment; and it was then considered of such importance, that a formal possession was taken of it by two commanders of the Company's ships in the year 1620, in the name of King James of Great Britain, a period of thirty years antecedent to the establishment of the colony by the United Provinces. The particulars of this transaction are entered at full length on the records of the East-India Company; and, as the reasoning then upon it will more strongly apply at this time, it may not be amiss to insert an extract from them:

"James, by the grace of God, king of Great-
"Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the
"Faith, &c.—Know all men, by the present pub-
"lication hereof, that according to our bounden
"duties to our Sovereign Lord the King, James,
"by the grace of God, King of Great-Britain, &c.
"and the State;

"We, Andrew Shillinge and Humphrey Fitzher-
"bert, chief commanders of the two fleets at present
"bound for Surat and Bantam, &c. upon a good
"consideration, and by a consultation holden on
"shore, the first of July 1620, of both fleets, on the
"coast of Africa, in the bay of Saldania aforesaid,

" for and in the name of the said high and mighty " Prince James, and for and in the name of the " whole continent near adjoining, so far to be ex- " tended as that at present no Christian prince nor " potentate have any fort or garrison for plantation " within the limits aforesaid; and our Sovereign " Lord the King to be thereunto entitled Lord or " Prince, or by any other name or title whatsoever " that shall seem best unto his gracious wisdom.

" Dated, proclaimed, executed, and subscribed, " in the Bay of Saldania, the third day of " July, 1620.

(Signed) " HUMPHREY FITZHERBERT, " ANDREW SHILLINGE."

EXTRACT.

" Notwithstanding all which, may it please your " worships to be certified, that we whose names are " hereunto subscribed, tending his Majesty's supre- " macy and sovereignty more than our own safetys; " and falling into the consideration of the conve- " niency of this bay of Saldania, by us so called, " situate and being in the latitude of 34° or there- " about South latitude, for the better prosecution " of your trade to the East-Indies, upon a full and " general consultation holden on shore by both your " fleets, now bound for Surat and Bantam, the first " day of July, in the year of our Lord 1620, have " fully agreed to take possession of the said bay of " Saldania for and in the name of our sovereign " lord the king, James, by the grace of God, &c. " and for and in the name of the whole continent " near adjoining, so far to be extended as that no " Christian prince or potentate have at present any

" fort or garrison for plantation within the limits " aforesaid, as by a deed published, executed and " subscribed in the said bay of Saldania, the third " day of July 1620, herewith sent your worships, " more plainly may appear; which deed was pub- " lished with great solemnity before the English and " the Dutch; who seemed likewise much to approve " the same. And in token of possession, taken as " aforesaid, and for a memorial hereafter, we have " placed a heap of stones on a hill lying West- " south-west from the road in the said bay, and " call it by the name of King James his Mount. " The main and principle reasons which induced " us to do this without order, were many. First, " at our arrival in the Bay we found nine great " ships of the States ready to set sail for Bantam, who " declared to us plainly that the States did mean to " make a plantation here the next year, and that " they had taken a view of the bay, and made a " road already in the country some thirty or forty " miles, &c. meaning, as we suppose, and it is not " to be doubted, to make us hereafter pay for our " water and anchorage towards defraying their in- " tended plantation. Likewise this great country, " if it were well discovered, would be kept in sub- " jection with a few men and little charge, consider- " ing how the inhabitants are but naked men and " without a leader or policy. We also thought to " entitle the King's Majesty thereto by this weak " means, than to let it fall for want of prevention, " into the hands of the States, knowing very well " that his Majesty is able to maintain his title by " his word against the States, and by his power " against any other prince or potentate whatsoever; " and better it is that the Dutch, or any other na- " tion whatsoever, should be his subjects in this " place, than that his subjects should be subject to

" them or any other. To which may be added the " practice of all men of all times and in all places " in the like cause, entitling their sovereigns to be " governors where no government is already insti- " tuted. Many more particulars might be alleged, " as the certain refreshing of your fleets quickly ac- " quired out of your own means by plantation, and " to be hoped for from the Blacks, when there is a " government established to keep them in awe. " The whale fishery besides persuades us that it " would be profitable to defray part of your charge. " The fruitfulness of the soil, together with the tem- " per of the air, assures us that the Blacks, with " the time, will come in, for their ease, and of ne- " cessity. Time will, no doubt, make them your " servants, and by serving you they will become " hereafter (we hope) the servants of God."

No further notice seems to have been taken by the British government of this possession, at that time; nor does it appear that any kind of interference or contravention was made by it when the Dutch East-India Company sent out Van Riebeck, in order to form a settlement there, in the year 1650. Till this period the English, the Portugueze and the Dutch had indiscriminately refreshed their crews at the Cape. The Portugueze, who were the first discoverers of the Southern extremity of the continent of Africa, at least in modern times, established no settlement nearer to it than the Banks of Rio Infanté, now the Great Fish River, and boundary of the Colony to the Eastward, which is nearly six hundred miles from the Cape of Good Hope; and this they soon abandoned for want of shelter for their shipping, which they afterwards found, farther to the Eastward, in the bay of De la Goa, still in their possession. At length, however, from the very fa-

vourable representations of Van Riebeck, then a surgeon of one of the Dutch ships, the East-India Company came to a resolution to colonize the Cape; and since the first establishment to the present war, a period of near 180 years, it continued in their hands. The progress of the population and the extent of territory have been tolerably rapid. The former, like some of the provinces of North America, has nearly doubled itself in every twenty years. It was first settled in 1650 by a hundred male persons, to whom were shortly afterwards sent out, from the houses of industry in Holland, about an equal number of females; and the present population exceeds twenty thousand whites: many of these, however, have since been imported from Europe.

The difficulties that for a time impeded the extension of the settlement, were principally occasioned by the number of wild beasts of various kinds that swarmed in every part of the country. In the private journal of the founder of the colony it is noticed, that lions and leopards, wolves and hyænas, committed nightly depredations, for some time after the first establishment, under the walls of the fort. The opposition of the native Hottentots seems to have given them little interruption. They soon discovered the predominant passion of this weak and peaceable people for spirituous liquors, and that a bottle of brandy was a passport through every horde. With this and tobacco, iron, and a few paltry trinkets, they purchased a part of the country and of their stock of cattle, and then took the rest by force. A cask of brandy was the price of a whole district; and nine inches in length of an iron hoop the purchase of a fat ox. Deprived, by their passion for intoxicating liquors and baubles, of the only means of existence, the numbers of the natives be-

gan rapidly to decline; and the encroachments of the settlers were in proportion to the diminution of the obstacles. Finding it unnecessary to limit the extent of their possessions, the policy of the Government kept pace with the propensity of its subjects to spread themselves wide over the country. It foresaw that a spirit of industry, if encouraged in a mild and temperate climate, and on a fertile soil, might one day produce a society impatient of the shackles imposed on it by the parent state. It knew, that to supply to its subjects the wants of life without the toil of labour or the anxiety of care; to keep them in ignorance, and to prevent a ready intercourse with each other, were the most likely means to counteract such a spirit. It granted lands, therefore, on yearly leases, at the small fixed rent of twenty-four rixdollars (not five pounds sterling) in any part of the country. A law was also passed, that the nearest distance from house to house was to be three miles, so that each farm consisted of more than five thousand acres of land, and consequently was rented at the rate of something less than a farthing an acre. From a scarcity of water, it frequently happened that many farms were at twice that distance from each other. No land was granted in property except in the vicinity of the Cape. As the Dutch advanced, the natives retired; and those that remained with their herds among the new settlers, were soon reduced to the necessity of becoming their servants.

No permanent limits to the colony were ever fixed under the Dutch government. The pastoral life that the peasantry of the remote districts at all times adopted, required a great extent of country to feed their numerous herds; and the imbecility and easy temper of the adjacent tribes of natives favoured

their avaricious views; and the government was either unwilling, or thought itself unable, to restrain them. Having no kind of chart nor survey, except of such districts as were contiguous to the Cape, it possessed a very limited and imperfect knowledge of the geography of the remoter parts, collected chiefly from the reports of the peasantry, fallacious often, through ignorance or design, or of those who had made excursions for their profit or pleasure, or from expeditions sent out by order and at the expense of government; and the object of these, it would appear, was with the view rather of carrying on a lucrative trade with the bordering tribes of natives, than to supply useful information respecting the colony. Attended with the parade of a military guard, surgeons, land-surveyors, burghers with waggons, oxen, horses, and Hottentots without number, not one of them has furnished a single sketch even towards assisting the knowledge of the geography of the country. The only persons who appear to have travelled with no other view than that of acquiring useful information, were the governor Van Plettenberg and the late colonel Gordon. These two gentlemen fixed, upon the spot, the boundaries of the colony, as they now stand, to the eastward. To complete the line of demarcation, through the heart of the country to the western shore, was one of the objects of the several journies that supplied the materials of the following pages. The chart that accompanies them, was undertaken and executed by the order of the Earl of Macartney, in the years 1797 and 1798, when these journies were made. It was constructed entirely from actual observations of latitude and of bearings, estimation of distances, and frequent angular intersections of remarkable points and objects.

the cultivated plant of India is now on trial. Different species of the cactus, the plant on which the cochineal insect feeds, grow just as well here as on the opposite continent. The tea-plant has long been in the country, but totally neglected. It is a hardy shrub, which when once planted is not easily eradicated; and the soil, the climate, and general face of the country, bear a strong analogy to those provinces of China to which it is indigenous. Three years ago a small coffee plant was brought from the island of Bourbon, and is now in full berry, and promises to succeed remarkably well; the sugar cane equally so. Flax will give two crops in the year; and hemp, called by the Hottentots *Dacha*, is produced in great quantities; not, however, for the purpose of being manufactured into cordage or cloth, but merely for the sake of the leaflets, flowers, and young seeds, which are used by the slaves and Hottentots as a succedaneum for tobacco. The dwarf mulberry grows here as well as in China; but the common silk worm is not in the colony. Several species of wild moths, however, spin their coccoons among the shrubby plants of Africa. Among these there is one species, nearly as large as the Atlas, and answers to the description of the *Paphia* of Fabricius, which feeds upon the *Protea argentea*, the witteboom or silver tree of the Dutch, and might probably be turned to some account by cultivation. Dr. Roxburgh is of opinion, that it is precisely the same insect which spins the strong silk known in India by the name of Tussach. The palma christi, from the seed of which is expressed the castor oil, and the aloe, whose juice produces the well-known drug of that name, are natives of the country, and are met with almost every where in great plenty; as is also the cape olive, so like in habit and appearance to the cultivated plant of Europe, that

there can be little doubt as to the success of the latter; it is the more astonishing that this tree has not been introduced, since no vegetable oil, fit for culinary uses, has yet been discovered in the colony. For this purpose the sesamum would prove an useful grain. In most of the sandy flats are found in great abundance two varieties of the *Myrica cerifera*, or wax plant, from the berries of which is procurable, by simple boiling, a firm pure wax; and the honey bee is every where wild on the heathy sides of the hills; but the culture of the plant and of the insect have hitherto been equally neglected.

Timber of all kinds for building is an exceeding scarce and expensive article at the Cape, yet little pains have yet been taken to rear it near the town. Avenues of oak trees, plantations of the white poplar, and of the stone pine, are to be seen near most of the country houses not very distant from the Cape, and have been found to thrive most rapidly; but the timber they produce is generally shaken and unsound. The oak that has been introduced into the colony appears to be that variety of the *Quercus Robur* known in England by the name of *Durmast* oak, much of which grows in the New Forest, and is but of little estimation among ship builders. It is distinguished by the acorns growing in clusters, and each having a long foot stalk. The larch, whose growth in Europe is rapid, and yet the timber as good or better than any of the pine tribe, would be an acquisition and an ornament to the present naked hills of the Cape; and the beech would no doubt thrive in those places where the poplar does so well.

Of native plants, that which is the most cultivated, in the vicinity of the town, is the silver tree above

mentioned. Whole woods of it stretch along the feet of the eastern side of the Table Mountain, planted solely for fuel. The *Conocarpa*, another species of Protea, the Kreupel boom of the Dutch, is also planted along the sides of the hills: its bark is employed in tanning leather, and the branches for fire-wood. The *grandiflora*, *speciosa* and *mellifera*, different species of the same genus, grow every where in wild luxuriance, and are collected for fuel, as are also the larger kinds of *Ericas* or heaths, *phyllicas*, *Brunias*, *polygalas*, the *Olea Capensis*, *Euclea racemosa*, *Sophora*, and many other arboreous plants, that grow in great abundance both on the hills of the peninsula, and on the sandy isthmus that connects it with the continent. The article of fuel is so scarce, that a small cart load of these plants sells in the town from five to seven dollars, or twenty to eight-and-twenty shillings. In most families a slave is kept expressly for collecting fire-wood. He goes out in the morning, ascends the steep mountains of the peninsula, where waggons cannot approach, and returns at night with two small bundles of faggots, the produce of six or eight hours hard labour, swinging at the two ends of a bamboo carried across the shoulder. Some families have two and even three slaves, whose sole employment consists in climbing the mountains in search of fuel. The expense of a few faggots, whether thus collected or purchased by the load, for preparing victuals only, as the kitchen alone has any fire place, amounts, in a moderate family, to forty or fifty pounds a-year.

The addition to the inhabitants of five thousand troops, and a large fleet stationed at the Cape, has increased the demand for fuel to such a degree, that serious apprehensions have been entertained of some

deficiency shortly happening in the supply of this necessary article. Under this idea the attention of the English has been, for some time past, directed towards finding out a substitute for wood. The appearance of all the mountains in Southern Africa, being particularly favourable to the supposition that fossil coal might be found in the bowels of most of those inferior hills connected with, and interposed between, them and the sea, His Excellency the Earl of Macartney, well knowing how valuable an acquisition such a discovery would prove to the colony, directed a search to be made. Boring rods were prepared, and men from the regiments, who had laboured in the collieries of England, were selected to make the experiment. *Wynberg*, a tongue of land projecting from the Table Mountain, was the spot fixed on, and the rods were put down there through hard clay, pipe-clay, iron-stone and sand-stone, in successive strata, to the depth of twenty-three feet. The operation of boring was then discontinued by the discovery of actual coal coming out, as miners express it, to day, along the banks of a deep rivulet flowing out of the Tygerberg, a hill that terminates the isthmus to the eastward. The stratum of coaly matter appeared to lie nearly horizontal. Immediately above it was pipe-clay and white sand-stone; and it rested on a bed of indurated clay. It ran from ten inches to two feet in thickness; differed in its nature in different parts: in some places were dug out large ligneous blocks, in which the traces of the bark, knots and grain were distinctly visible; and in the very middle of these were imbedded pieces of iron pyrites, running through them in crooked veins, or lying in irregular lumps. Other parts of the stratum consisted of laminated coal of the nature of turf, such as by naturalists would be called Lithanthrax, and pieces

occurred that seemed to differ in nothing from that species known in England by the name of Bovey coal. The ligneous part burned with a clear flame, without much smell, and left a residuum of light white ashes like those of dried wood. The more compact earthy and stoney parts burned less clear, gave out a sulphureous smell, and left behind a slaty caulk, that soon contracted on the surface a deep brown ochraceous crust. The borer being put down in several places in hopes of meeting with the main bed of coal, the general result was as follows:

In the bed of the rivulet:

	Feet.
Coal - - - - -	2
Blue soapy rock - - - -	5
White soapy rock - - -	22
Grey sand-stone with clay - - -	21
Sand-stone of chocolate brown - -	14
Bluish soapy clay - - - -	31
Striated sand, red and white, containing clay	33
	128

Here the operation was discontinued for the present.

Most of the European, and several of the tropical, fruits have already been introduced into the colony, and cultivated with success. In every month of the year the table may be supplied with at least ten different sorts of fruit, green and dry. Oranges of two kinds, the common China and the small Mandarin, figs, grapes and guavas, are all very good; peaches and apricots not bad. These, when in season, are sold at the rate of one shilling for 100. Ap-

ples, pears, pomegranates, quinces, and medlars, thrive well and bear plentifully, but are not very good. Few indeed are at the pains of grafting even the trees, but suffer them to grow up from the seed. Plums and cherries that are produced in the colony, are of an indifferent quality. Gooseberries and currants are said to have been tried, but without success. The nectarine has not yet been introduced. Raspberries are tolerably good, but scarce: and strawberries are brought to market every month of the year. There are no filberts nor common hazel nuts, but almonds, walnuts and chesnuts, all of good quality, are plentiful, as are also mulberries of a large size and excellent flavour.

The market is likewise tolerably well supplied with most of the European vegetables for the table, from the farms that lie scattered along the eastern side of the peninsula, in number about forty or fifty. On some of these farms are vineyards also of considerable extent, producing, besides the supply of the market with green and ripe grapes and prepared raisins, about seven hundred leaguers or pipes of wine a-year, each containing 154 gallons. Of these from fifty to a hundred consist of a sweet luscious wine, well known in England by the name of Constantia, the produce of two farms lying close under the mountains, about mid-way between the two bays. The grape is the Muscatel, and the rich quality of the wine is in part owing to the situation and soil, and partly to the care taken in the manufacture. No fruit but such as is full ripe, no stalks are suffered to go under the press; precautions seldom taken by the other farmers of the Cape.

The vineyards, gardens and fruiteries are divided into small squares, and inclosed by cut hedges of

oaks, quince trees, or myrtles, to break off the south-east winds of summer, which, from their strength and dryness, are found to be deleterious to vegetation; but the grain is raised on open grounds. The produce of this article on the peninsula is confined chiefly to barley, which, in this country, is preferred to oats for feeding horses. None of the common flat-eared barley has yet been introduced, but that hexangular kind only is known, which in some parts of England is called *beer*, and in others *big*. Corn is generally cultivated beyond the isthmus and along the western coast, within the great north and south chain of mountains. The remote districts beyond these furnish a supply of horses, sheep, and horned cattle.

The natural productions of the Cape Peninsula, in the vegetable kingdom, are perhaps more numerous, varied, and elegant, than on any other spot of equal extent in the whole world. Of these, by the indefatigable labours of Mr. Masson, his Majesty's botanic garden at Kew exhibits a choice collection; but many are still wanting to complete it. Few countries can boast of so great a variety of the bulbous rooted plants as Southern Africa. In the month of September, at the close of the rainy season, the plains at the feet of the Table Mountain and on the west shore of Table Bay, called now the Green Point, exhibit a beautiful appearance. As in England the humble daisy, in the spring of the year, decorates the green sod, so at the Cape, in the same season, the whole surface is enlivened with the large Othonna, so like the daisy as to be distinguished only by a Botanist, springing up in myriads out of a verdant carpet, not however of grass, but composed generally of the low creeping *Trifolium melilotos*. The *Oxalis cernua*, and others of the same genus, varying through

every tint of colour from brilliant red, purple, violet, yellow, down to snowy whiteness, and the *Hypoxis stellata*, or star flower, with its regular radiated corolla, some of golden yellow, some of a clear unsullied white, and others, containing in each flower white, violet, and deep green, are equally numerous, and infinitely more beautiful. Whilst these are involving the petals of their showy flowrets at the setting of the sun, the modest *Ixia Cinnamomea*, of which are two varieties, one called here the Cinnamon, and the other the evening, flower, that has remained closed up in its brown calyx and invisible during the day, now expands its small white blossoms, and scents the air, throughout the night, with its fragrant odours. The tribe of *Ixias* are numerous and extremely elegant; but none more singular than that species which bears a long upright spike of pale green flowers. The *Iris*, the *Moræa*, *Antholiza*, and *Gladiolus*, each furnish a great variety of species not less elegant nor graceful than the *Ixia*. The *Gladiolus*, which is here called *Africaner*, is uncommonly beautiful with its tall waving spike of striped flowers, and has also a fragrant smell.* That species of a deep crimson is still more elegant. Of those genera which botanists have distinguished by the name of the liliaceous class, many are exceedingly grand and beautiful, particularly the *Amaryllis*, of which there are several species. The sides of the hills are finely scented with the family of *Geraniums*; the different species of which, exhibiting such variety of foliage, once started an idea that this tribe of plants alone might imitate in their leaves every genus of the vegetable world.

* A small yellow *Iris* furnishes a root for the table, in size and taste not unlike a chesnut. These small roots are called *Uyntjis* by the colonists, and that of the *Aponegeton distachion*, which is also eaten, *water uyntjis*.

The frutescent, or shrubby plants, that grow in wild luxuriance, some on the hills, others in the deep chasms of the mountains, and others on the sandy isthmus, furnish an endless variety for the labours of the botanist. Of the numbers of this class of naturalists, who have visited the Cape, none have returned to Europe without having added to his collection plants that were not described nor known. The eye of a stranger is immediately caught by the extensive plantations of the *Protea Argentea*, whose silver coloured leaves, of the soft texture of sattin, gives it a distinguished appearance among the deep foliage of the oak, and still deeper hue of the stone pine. It is singular enough that though the numerous species of *Protea* be indiscriminately produced on almost every hill of the colony, the silver tree should be confined to the feet of the Table Mountain alone, a circumstance that led to the supposition of its not being indigenous to the Cape: it has never yet, however, been discovered in any other part of the world. The tribe of heaths are uncommonly elegant and beautiful: they are met with equally numerous and flourishing on the stoney hills and sandy plains; yet, unless raised from seed, are with difficulty transplanted into gardens. Little inferior to the heaths are the several species of the genera to which botanists have given the names of *Polygala*, *Brunia*, *Diosma*, *Borbonia*, *Cliffortia*, and *Asparagus*; to which might be added a vast variety of others, to be enumerated only in a work professedly written on the subject.

The peninsula of the Cape affords but a narrow field for the inquiries of the Zoologist. The wooded kloofs or clefts in the mountains still give shelter to the few remaining troops of wolves and hyenas that not many years ago were very troublesome to

the town. The latter, indeed, generally shuns the habitations of men; but the former, even yet, sometimes extends his nightly prowl to the very skirts of the town, enticed by the dead cattle and offals from slaughter-houses, that are shamefully suffered to be left or thrown even at the sides of the public roads. In the caverns of the Table Mountain, and indeed in almost every mountain of the colony, is found in considerable number a small dusky-coloured animal about the size of a rabbit, with short ears and no tail, called here the Das, and described in the *Systema Naturæ* of *Linnæus* under the name of *Hyrax Capensis*, and by Pennant under that of Cape Cavy. The flesh is used for the table, but is black, dry, and of an indifferent flavour. One species of Antelope, called here the Griesbok or grizzled deer, frequents the thickets of the hills, and does no small injury at nights to the infant shoots of the vine; and another species of the name of Düiker or Diver, from the manner of its plunging and concealing itself among the bushes, is not uncommonly met with on the sandy isthmus. Neither of these animals appear as yet to have been described in any systematic work, though very common in every part of the colony, and often mentioned by travellers. The colour of the Düiker is wholly of a dusky brown; is about three feet in length and two and a half in height: the male has horns straight, black, nearly parallel, but diverging a little towards the points, four inches long, and annulated close to the base. The female has no horns; length of the ears seven inches; of the tail, five inches. The *sinus lachrymalis*, or subocular indent, which most of the antelopes have, is in this species so conspicuous, that the Dutch say it carries the gall-bladder under the eye. The Greisbok is of a grizzled or greyish colour, the ground bright brown, interspers-

ed with silver hairs; length two feet nine inches; height one foot nine inches; ears five inches, black, and naked; tail two inches; the *sinus lachrymalis* very distinct. The male has horns four inches long, straight, smooth, tapering to a point, black: the female has no horns. The Steenbok, once the most numerous of the antelope tribe that inhabited the peninsula, is now nearly extirpated from this part of Africa, though equally abundant with the other two beyond the isthmus. This animal is the *Antelope Grimmea* of Pallas, and the Guinea antelope of Pennant. The horses of the Cape are not indigenous, but were first introduced from Java, and since that, at various times, from different parts of the world. The grizzled and the black spaniard, first brought hither, about twenty years ago, from South America, where the breed now runs wild over that extensive country, are the horses that are most esteemed for their beauty, their gentleness, and service. Though small, and often very ill-fed, they are capable of sustaining a great degree of hard labour. Heavy waggons, however, are chiefly drawn by oxen. These are all indigenous, except the breed from a few European cattle that have lately been introduced. The Cape ox is distinguished by its long legs, high shoulders, and large horns.

The larger kinds of birds that hover round the summit of the Table Mountain, are vultures, eagles, kites, and crows, that assist the wolves in cleansing the country near the town of a nuisance that is tacitly permitted by the police. Ducks, teals, and snipes are met with in the winter season about the pools and periodical lakes on the isthmus. Turtle doves, a thrush called the Sprew, and the Fiscal bird, the *Lanius Collaris*, frequent the gardens near the town.

The market is constantly supplied with a variety of sea-fish that are caught in the bay, and every where along the coast. The *Roman*, a deep rose-coloured perch, is considered as the best fish in the colony, but is never caught except in False-bay, and on the coast to the eastward of it.* Next to the Roman are the red and the white *Steenbrassems*, or Stone-breams, two species, or perhaps varieties only, of perches. They are taken from one to thirty pounds in weight. Of the same genus there are several other species, and all of them tolerably good. One of these called the Cabeljau, with the root of the pectoral fins black, tail undivided, and one back fin, grows to the weight of forty pounds: another, called the Hottentot's fish, from its dirty brown colour, with one back fin, and tail bifid, commonly runs about four pounds: another perch, called the Silver-fish, has one back fin, and tail bifid; ground of a rose-coloured tinge, with five longitudinal silver bands on each side, described probably as the *perca striata:* and a fourth species, called the *Stompneas*, with one back fin and tail bifid, is distinguished by six transverse bands of black and white spots down each side. The *Harder*, a species of *Clupea*, not unlike the common herring, is considered as a good fish; and the *Klip* or rock-fish, the *Blennius viviparus*, makes no bad fry.† The *Elst*, the *Scomber trachurus*, schad or horse mackrell, has a good flavour, but is reckoned to be unwholesome food, and on that account seldom eaten. The *Scomber Scomber*, common mackrell, sometimes makes its appearance after bad

* It has one back fin with twelve spines, and divided tail; a silver band along each side of the back fin, turning down to the belly, and a blue arched line over the upper mandible connecting the two eyes.

† Another Blennius, called the King Rock-fish, is sometimes caught with the former, to which, from its shape and resemblance to the *Muræna* of the ancients, naturalists have given the specific name of *Muræoides*.

weather in large shoals in the bay. The *Springer* is esteemed for the thick fat coating that lines the cavity of the abdomen. The *Speering*, a species of *Antherina*, is a small transparent fish with a broad band, resembling a plate of silver, on each side. The *Knorhaen*, a species of *Trigla*, or Gurnard, with two strong spines on the fore part of each eye, and two on the cover of the gills, is not a bad fish; nor is the common Sole inferior here to that in Europe. Dolphins are sometimes caught in the bay after a gale of wind. That singular species of Ray fish, the electrical torpedo, is well known to the fishermen by the frequent strokes they receive from treading on the small young ones that are often thrown upon the beach in the winter season. Another species is used for the table and eaten by the English under the name of Skate. There is also in some of the rivers of the country an electrical *Silurus*, but it is not eaten; and the *Bagre*, a second species of *Silurus*, commonly caught in the bay, is considered as poisonous.* A species of bray-fish and different sorts of crabs are plentiful and tolerably good. Muscles of various kinds, and oysters, abound on the sea-coast; the former of a high, strong flavour, but the latter fully as good as those of Europe; they are, however, not to be procured in quantities near the Cape. A species of *Asterias* or star-fish, and the paper *Nautilus*, are sometimes sent from hence to Europe to be placed in the cabinets of the curious; as is also that singular little animal called by naturalists the *Syngnathus Hippocampus*, and sometimes sea-horse.

Few shells or marine productions are met with on this part of the coast of Africa that would be consi-

* The *Scorpæna Capensis*, called here *Jacob Evertsor*, is a firm, dry fish, but not very commonly used.

dered as rare by the naturalist. Small corallines, madrepores, sponges, and other productions of marine animals, are frequently thrown up on the shores of the bays, but such only as are commonly known. The shells that mostly abound are of the univalve tribe. The *patella* genus is the most plentiful; and that large, beautiful, pearly shell, the *Haliotis Midæ*, is very common. *Cypræa*, *Volutes*, and *Cones* are also abundant. All these are collected on the coast near the Cape, and burnt into lime, there being no limestone on the whole peninsula, and none worth the labour of getting, and the expenditure of fuel necessary for burning it, in any part of the colony.

During the winter season whales are very plentiful in all the bays of Southern Africa, and give to the fishermen a much easier opportunity of taking them than in the open sea. They are smaller and less valuable than those of the same kind in the northern seas, but sufficiently so to have engaged the attention of a Company lately established here for carrying on a fishery in Table Bay. They run in general from fifty to sixty feet in length, and produce from six to ten tons of oil each. The bone of such small fish is not very valuable. It is remarked that all those which have yet been caught were females; and it is supposed that they resort to the bays as places of shelter to deposit their young. Seals were once plentiful on the rocky islands of False bay, as is still that curious animal the penguin, forming the link of connection between the feathered and the finny tribe.

Insects of almost every description abound in the summer months, and particularly a species of locust which infests the gardens, devouring, if not kept

under, every green thing that comes in its way. Musquitoes are less troublesome here than in most warm climates, nor does their bite cause much inflammation; but a small sand fly, so minute as scarcely to be visible, is a great torment to those who may have occasion to cross among the shrubbery of the sandy isthmus. Lizards of various kinds, among which is the cameleon, are very abundant; and small land-turtles are every where crawling about in the high roads and on the naked plains. Scorpions, scolopendras, and large black spiders, are among the noxious insects of the Cape; and almost all the snakes of the country are venomous.

The first appearance of so stupendous a mass of naked rock as the Table Mountain, cannot fail to arrest, for a time, the attention of the most indifferent observer of nature from all inferior objects, and must particularly interest that of the mineralogist. As a description of this mountain will, with few variations, answer to that of almost all the great ranges in Southern Africa, it may not perhaps be thought too tedious to enter into a detail of its form, dimensions, and constituent parts.

The name of *Table Land* is given by seamen to every hill or mountain whose summit presents to the eye of the observer a line parallel to the horizon. The north front of the Table Mountain, directly facing the town, is a horizontal line, or very nearly so, of about two miles in length. The bold face, that rises almost at right angles to meet this line, is supported, as it were, by a number of projecting buttresses that rise out of the plain, and fall in with the front a little higher than midway from the base. These, and the division of the front, by two great chasms, into three parts, a curtain flanked by two

bastions, the first retiring and the others projecting, give to it the appearance of the ruined walls of some gigantic fortress. These walls rise above the level of Table Bay to the height of 3582 feet, as determined by Captain Bridges of the royal engineers, from a measured base and angles taken with a good theodolite. The east side, which runs off at right angles to the front, is still bolder, and has one point higher by several feet. The west side, along the sea-shore, is rent into deep chasms, and worn away into a number of pointed masses. In advancing to the southward about four miles, the mountain descends in steps or terraces, the lowest of which communicates by gorges with the chain that extends the whole length of the peninsula. The two wings of the front, one the Devil's Mountain, and the other the Lion's Head, make in fact, with the Table, but one mountain. The depredations of time and the force of torrents having carried away the looser and less compact parts, have disunited their summits, but they are still joined at a very considerable elevation above the common base. The height of the first is 3315, and of the latter 2160 feet. The Devil's Mountain is broken into irregular points; but the upper part of the Lion's Head is a solid mass of stone, rounded and fashioned like a work of art, and resembling very much, from some points of view, the dome of St. Paul's placed upon a high cone-shaped hill.

These three mountains are composed of a multitude of rocky strata piled on each other in large tabular masses. Their exact horizontal position denote the origin of the mass to be neptunian and not volcanic; and that since its first formation no convulsion of the earth has happened in this part of Africa sufficient to have disturbed the nice arrange-

ment of its parts. The strata of these postdeluvian ruins, not being placed in the order of their specific gravity, might lead to the conclusion that they were deposited in successive periods of time, were it not for the circumstance of their lying close upon each other without any intermediate veins of earthy or other extraneous materials. The stratification of the Cape peninsula, and indeed of the whole colony, is arranged in the following order:

The shores of Table Bay, and the substratum of the plain on which the town is built, compose a bed of a blue compact schistus, generally placed in parallel ridges in the direction of north-west and south-east, but frequently interrupted by large masses of a hard flinty rock of the same colour, belonging to that class of aggregated stones, proposed by Mr. Kirwan to be called granitelles. Fine blue flags, with whitish streaks, are procured from Robben Island, in the mouth of Table Bay, which are used for steps, and for paving the terraces in front of most of the houses.

Upon the schistus lies a body of strong clay, coloured with iron, from a pale yellow to deep red, and abounding with brown foliated mica. Embedded in the clay are immense blocks of granite, so loosely cemented together that the constituent parts are easily separable by the hand. The mica, the sand, and indeed the whole bed of clay, seem to have been formed from the decomposition of the granite. Between the Lion's Head and the sea are vast masses of these aggregated stones entirely exposed. Most of them are rent and falling asunder from their own weight: others are completely hollowed out, so as to be nothing more than a crust or shell; and they have almost invariably a small

aperture on that side of the stone which faces the bottom of the hill or the sea-shore. Such excavated blocks of coarse granite are very common on the hills of Africa, and are frequently inhabited by run-away slaves.

Resting on the granite and clay is the first horizontal stratum of the Table Mountain, commencing at about five hundred feet above the level of the sea. It is siliceous sand-stone of a dirty yellow colour. Above this is a deep brown sand-stone, containing calciform ores of iron, and veins of hematite running through the solid rock. Upon this rests a mass, of about a thousand feet in height, of a whitish-grey shining granular quartz, mouldering away in many places by exposure to the weather, and in others passing into sand-stone. The summit of the mountain has entirely undergone the transition into sand-stone; and the skeletons of the rocks, that have hitherto resisted the ravages of time, are surrounded by myriads of oval-shaped and rounded pebbles of semitransparent quartz that were once embedded in them. Those pebbles having acquired their rounded form by friction, when the matrix, in which they are still found buried, had not assumed the form and consistence of stone; and the situation of this stratified matrix on blocks of primæval granite, clearly point out a grand revolution to have taken place on the surface of the globe we inhabit. No organized remains, however, of the Old World, such as shells buried in the rock, petrefactions of fishes, or impressions of plants, appear on the sides of the Table Mountain, as has been asserted.

To those whom mere curiosity, or the more laudable desire of acquiring information, may tempt to make a visit to the summit of the Table Mountain,

the best and readiest access will be found directly up the face next to the town. The ascent lies through a deep chasm that divides the curtain from the left bastion. The length of this ravine is about three-fourths of a mile; the perpendicular cheeks at the foot more than a thousand feet high, and the angle of ascent about forty-five degrees. The entrance into this deep chasm is grand and awful. The two sides, distant at the lower part about eighty yards from each other, converge within a few feet at the portal, which opens upon the summit, forming two lines of natural perspective. On passing this portal, a plain of very considerable extent spreads out, exhibiting a dreary waste and an insipid tameness, after quitting the bold and romantic scenery of the chasm. And the adventurer may perhaps feel strongly disposed to ask himself, if such be all the gratification he is to receive for having undergone so great a fatigue in the ascent. The mind, however, will soon be relieved at the recollection of the great command given by the elevation; and the eye, leaving the immediate scenery, will wander with delight round the whole circumference of the horizon. On approaching the verge of the mountain—

"How fearful
"And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
* * * * *
"The fishermen that walk upon the beach
"Appear like mice; and yon tall anchoring bark
"Diminish'd to her cock. * * *
* * * "The murmuring surge,
"That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
"Cannot be heard so high."

All the objects on the plain below are, in fact, dwindled away to the eye of the spectator into littleness and insignificance. The flat-roofed houses

of Cape Town, disposed into formal clumps, appear like those paper fabrics which children are accustomed to make with cards. The shrubbery on the sandy isthmus looks like dots, and the farms and their inclosures as so many lines, and the more finished parts of a plan drawn on paper.

On the swampy parts of the flat summit, between the masses of rock, are growing several sorts of handsome shrubs. The *Cenæa mucronata*, a tall, elegant, frutescent plant, is peculiar to this situation; as is also that species of heath called the *Physodes*, which, with its clusters of white flowers glazed with a glutinous coating, exhibits in the sunshine a very beautiful appearance. Many other heaths, common also on the plains, seemed to thrive equally well on this elevated situation as in a milder temperature. The air on the summit, in the clear weather of winter, and in the shade, is generally about fifteen degrees of Fahrenheit's scale lower than in Cape Town. In the summer season the difference is much greater, when that well-known appearance of the fleecy cloud, not inaptly called the *Table Cloth*, envelopes the summit of the mountain.

A single glance at the topography of the Cape and the adjacent country, will be sufficient to explain the cause of this phenomenon, which has so much the appearance of singularity. The mountainous peninsula is connected with a still more mountainous continent, on which the great ranges run parallel to, and at no great distance from, the sea-coast. In the heat of the summer season, when the south-east monsoon blows strong at sea, the water taken up by evaporation is borne in the air to the continental mountains, where, being condensed, it rests on their summits in the form of a thick cloud.

This cloud, and a low dense bank of fog on the sea, are the precursors of a similar, but lighter, fleece on the Table Mountain, and of a strong gale of wind in Cape Town from the south-east. These effects may be thus accounted for: The condensed air on the summit of the mountains of the continent rushes, by its superior gravity, towards the more rarefied atmosphere over the isthmus, and the vapour it contains is there taken up and held invisible, or in transparent solution. From hence it is carried by the south-east wind towards the Table and its neighbouring mountains, where, by condensation from decreased temperature and concussion, the air is no longer capable of holding the vapour with which it was loaded, but is obliged to let it go. The atmosphere on the summit of the mountain becomes turbid, the cloud is shortly formed, and, hurried by the wind over the verge of the precipice in large fleecy volumes, rolls down the steep sides towards the plain, threatening momentarily to deluge the town. No sooner, however, does it arrive, in its descent, at the point of temperature equal to that of the atmosphere in which it has floated over the isthmus, than it is once more taken up and "vanishes "into air—to thin air." Every other part of the hemisphere shows a clear blue sky, undisturbed by a single vapour.

Though it has been usual to consider the year at the Cape as consisting of two periods, called the good and the bad monsoon, yet, as these are neither regular in their returns, nor certain in their continuance, the division into four seasons, as in Europe, should appear to be much more proper. The spring, reckoned from the beginning of September, to that of December, is the most agreeable season. The summer, from December to March, is the

hottest. The autumn, from March to June, is variable weather, generally fine, and the latter part very pleasant. And the winter, from June to September, though in general pleasant, is frequently very stormy, rainy, and cold. The two most powerful winds are the north-west and south-east. The first generally commences towards the end of May, and blows occasionally till the end of August, and sometimes through the month of September. The south-east predominates the rest of the year, and, when the cloud shows itself on the mountain, blows in squalls with great violence. In the midst of one of these storms the appearance of the heavenly bodies, as observed by the Abbé de la Caille, is strange and terrible: "The stars look larger, and "seem to dance; the moon has an undulating "tremor; and the planets have a sort of beard like "comets." Effects such as these are not confined to the Cape alone, but are, in many parts of the world, among the terrific accompanyments of a storm, and are probably occasioned by looking at the objects through a medium that is loaded with vapour, and moving along with great velocity.

The approach of winter is first observed by the south-east winds becoming less frequent, less violent, and blowing *clear*, or without the fleecy cloud upon the mountain. Dews then begin to fall very heavy, and thick fogs hang in the mornings about the hills. The north-west winds feel raw and cold, and increase at length to a storm, with heavy rain, thunder, and lightning, continuing generally for two or three days. When the weather brightens up, the mountains on the continent appear with their tops buried in snow: the table has also a sprinkling of snow or hail about the summit. At such times the thermometer, about sun-rise, stands in the town at

40°, and will probably ascend, towards the middle of the day, to 70°, making a variation in temperature of 30 degrees in the course of five or six hours. The general standard, however, for the three winter months, may be reckoned from 50° at sun-rise to 60° at noon; and in the very middle of summer it varies from 70° to 90°, but generally rests for days together at 83° or 84°. It has been known to exceed 100° in Cape Town; but instances of so high a degree of temperature have been very rare. The heat of summer is seldom oppressive. The mornings are sometimes close and sultry, but the nights are always cool. The south-east breeze usually springs up towards the middle of the day, and dies away in the evening. When these winds blow with violence, and the cloud appears on the mountain, their greatest strength is when the sun has passed the meridian about 30 degrees, and they continue in squalls till mid-night. From November to April a shower of rain scarcely ever falls.

The barometer stands higher in the clear cold days of winter than in the settled serene weather of summer. The height of the column of mercury varies, in the former season, from 29,46 to 30,35 inches, one point indicating a storm with rain, thunder, and lightning; and the other settled fair weather. The changeable point is about 29,95 or 30 inches. The greatest range being only 89 hundred parts of an inch, the slightest alteration in the state of the barometer is sure to indicate a change of weather. The range of the mercury, in the summer season, is still less, being scarcely ever above 30,10, or below 29,74 inches. The south-east gales of wind seldom occasion a change of more than 15 hundred parts of an inch. Happy for the inhabitants of Cape Town, that by these winds a constant circulation of the air

is kept up during the summer months, without which the reflected heat from the naked front of the Table Mountain would make the town insupportable.

Most of the fatal diseases that prevail among the natives should appear to proceed rather from their habits of life than from any real unhealthiness in the climate. Nothing could afford a stronger proof of this conclusion, than the circumstance of there not having been one sick man in the general military hospital for several months, and not more than a hundred in the regimental hospitals out of five thousand troops; and these, according to the reports of the surgeons, were complaints generally brought on by too free an use of the wines and spirituous liquors of the country, of which their pay enables them to procure an excess. The sudden change of temperature, especially from heat to cold, may perhaps be one of the causes of consumptive complaints which are very frequent in all classes and ages. But the common disease to which those of the middle age are subject, is the dropsy. A confined and sedentary life; eating to excess, twice and commonly thrice a-day, of animal food swimming in fat, or made up into high-seasoned dishes; drinking raw ardent spirits; smoking tobacco; and, when satiated with indulging the sensual appetite, retiring in the middle of the day to sleep; seldom using any kind of exercise, and never such as might require bodily exertion,—are the usual habits in which a native of the Cape is educated. An apoplexy or a schirrous liver are the consequences of such intemperance. The former is seldom attended with immediate dissolution, on account of the languid state of the constitution; but it generally terminates in a dropsy, which shortly proves fatal. The diseases to which children are most subject, are eruptions of different

kinds, and sore throats. Neither the small-pox nor the measles are endemic; the former has made its appearance but twice or thrice since the establishment of the colony, but the latter has found its way much more frequently. Great caution has always been used by the government against their being introduced by foreign ships calling at the Cape. Instances of longevity are very rare, few exceeding the period of sixty years. The mortality in Cape Town, taken on the average in the last eight years, has been about two and a half in a hundred among the white inhabitants, and under three in a hundred among the slaves. Those in the latter condition, who live in the town, are in general well fed, well clothed, not much exposed to the weather, nor put to hard labour. Others in the country, whose principal food consists of black sandy bread, and the offals of butchers' meat, who labour from morning to night in the field, and those also who follow the arduous and daily task of gathering wood on the exposed sides of the mountains, or in the hot sands, are subject to bilious fevers, of which they seldom recover.

Few die by the hands of justice. In the last eight years 110 have been sentenced to death, 33 of whom were publicly executed, and these were chiefly slaves. The rest were condemned to labour during life at the public works. The confession of a crime, where strong and concurring evidence could not be produced, was sometimes extorted by the torture; and breaking on the wheel was a capital punishment. These were said to be seldom put in practice; yet at the time they were abolished, by order of his Majesty, the Court of Justice urged the necessity of their continuance, as proper engines of terror for preventing the commission of capital crimes, which,

they thought, simple strangling with a cord would be insufficient to effect. Contrary, however, to the opinion of the Court of Justice, there have been fewer executions, since the abolition of the rack and torture, than had taken place in an equal period for many years before: So much so, indeed, that one of the public executioners made an application for a pension in lieu of the emoluments he used to receive for the breaking of legs and arms. The fate of the other hangman was singular enough—On hearing that the abolition of the rack and torture was likely to take place, he waited upon the chief magistrate, to know from him whether it was the fashion among the English to break on the wheel. A few days after this he was found hanging in his room. It was thought that the fear of starving, for want of employment, on account of his having held such an odious office, had operated so powerfully on his mind as to have led him to the perpetration of self-murder. Under the idea of conveying terror into the minds of the multitude, the place of execution is erected close to the side of the great avenue leading into the town. The first object that presents itself to a stranger, after passing the Castle, is a large gallows flanked by wheels and engines of death—objects not well adapted for impressing any very favourable opinion either of the humanity of the people or the lenity of their laws. Though the custom of most European nations may have sanctioned public punishments, as warnings against the commission of crimes, the constant exposure of the instruments of death can have little share in producing this effect. The human mind, by long habit, becomes reconciled to objects that, for a time, might have created disgust and dismay; and nothing is more likely to happen than that the unreflecting part of the multitude should turn into a source of ridicule,

when made too familiar to them, what was intended to convey the sensation of terror.

There is, perhaps, no part of the world, out of Europe, where the introduction of slavery was less necessary than at the Cape of Good Hope. Nor would it ever have found its way into this angle of Africa, had the same spirit of Batavian industry, which raised a wealthy and populous republic out of the sea, impressed the minds of those who first formed the settlement. A temperate climate, a fertile soil, a mild and peaceable race of natives, were advantages that few infant colonies have possessed; and, as they still exist, may one day yet be turned to account. To encourage the native Hottentots in useful labour, by giving them an interest in the produce of that labour; to make them experience the comforts of civilized life, and to feel they have a place and a value in society, which the miserable policy of the Dutch government denied to them, would be the sure means of diminishing, and, in time, of entirely removing the necessity of slavery. Few negroes, in fact, have been imported since the capture, and those few by accident, or by special permission: and as the increased demand for colonial produce has required a proportional increase of labour, they now bear most extravagant prices. From one hundred to four hundred pounds sterling is daily paid for a slave in Cape Town; yet it is not unusual to find from twenty to thirty in one house. Some of these, indeed, are artificers, and are hired out at certain rates for the day, week, or month. The most active and docile, but the most dangerous, slaves, are the Malays. They are faithful, honest, and industrious; but so impatient of injury, and so capricious, that the slightest provocation will sometimes drive them into fits of frenzy, during the

continuance of which it would be unsafe to come within their reach. The revengeful spirit of a Malay was strongly marked by an occurrence which happened a short time ago. Conceiving that he not only had served his master sufficiently long, and with great fidelity, but had also paid him several sums of money, he was tempted to demand his liberty, and met with a refusal. The following morning the Malay murdered his fellow-slave. On being taken and brought up for examination before a commission of the court of Justice, he acknowledged that the boy he had murdered was his friend; but he had considered that the most effectual way to be revenged of his master was, not by taking away his life, but by robbing him of the value of a thousand rixdollars, by the loss of the boy, and another thousand by bringing himself, in so doing, to the gallows, the recollection of which would prey upon his avaricious mind for the remainder of his life.

The effects that a state of slavery invariably produce, on the minds and habits of a people, born and educated in the midst of it, are not less felt at the Cape than in the warmer climates. Among the upper ranks it is the custom for every child to have its slave, whose sole employment is to humour its caprices, and to drag it about from place to place lest it should too soon discover for what purposes nature had bestowed on it legs and arms. Even the lower class of people object to their children going out as servants, or being bound as apprentices to learn the useful trades, which, in their contracted ideas, would be considered as condemning them to perform the work of slaves.

The education of youth has hitherto been very much neglected. The government never hit upon

any successful plan for the establishment of public schools; and the individual had no other ambition but that of qualifying his sons, by writing and accounts, to become servants of the Company. This body of merchants had a number of persons in their employ who were very ill paid. Their salaries indeed were insufficient to afford them a bare subsistence; but it tacitly allowed them to negociate for themselves. The consequence of such a conduct was, that each became a kind of petty dealer. Each had his little private shop in some corner of his house. The most paltry articles were in the list of their commodities for sale; and those who ranked high in the government, and assumed a string of full-sounding epithets to their names, felt no sort of indignity in retailing the produce of their gardens; not indeed avowedly, but through the medium of their slaves. In fact, the minds of every class, the governor, the clergy, the fiscal, and the secretary of the court of justice excepted, were wholly bent on trade. *Koopman* or merchant was a title that conferred rank at the Cape, to which the military even aspired. On this subject the ideas of the Dutch differ widely from those of the Chinese, who have degraded the merchant into the very lowest order of their society.

That portion of the day, not employed in the concerns of trade, is usually devoted to the gratification of the sensual appetites. Few have any taste for reading, and none for the cultivation of the fine arts. They have no kind of public amusements except occasional balls; nor is there much social intercourse but by family parties, which usually consist of card-playing or dancing. Money-matters and merchandize engross their whole conversation. Yet none are opulent, though many in easy circumstances.

There are no beggars in the whole colony; and but a few who are the objects of public charity. The subsistence for these is derived from the interest of a fund established out of the church superfluities, from alms, donations, and collections made after divine service, and not from any tax laid upon the public. Except, indeed, a few colonial assessments for the repairs of the streets and public works, the inhabitants of the Cape have little drawback on their profits or the produce of their labour. The luxury of a carriage and horses, which in England is attended with an enormous expense, is kept up here for a trifle after the first cost. Those in the town that are used only for short excursions, or for taking the air, are open, and calculated for four or six persons. For making journies they have a kind of light waggon covered with sail-cloth, and sufficiently large to hold a whole family with clothes and provisions for several days. The coachman is generally one of those people known in the colony by the name of *Bastaards*, being a mixed breed between a Hottentot woman and European man, or a Hottentot woman and a slave. They make most excellent drivers, and think nothing of turning short corners, or of galloping through narrow avenues, with eight in hand. The ladies seldom take the exercise of riding on horseback, that exercise being considered as too fatiguing. They generally confine themselves to the house during the day, and walk the Mall in the public garden in the cool of the evening.

It has been the remark of most travellers, that the ladies of the Cape are pretty, lively, and good-humoured; possessing little of that phlegmatic temper which is a principal trait in the national character of the Dutch. The difference in the manners and appearance of the young men and the young

women, in the same family, is inconceivably great. The former are clumsy in their shape, aukward in their carriage, and of an unsociable disposition; whilst the latter are generally of a small delicate form, below the middle size, of easy and unaffected manners, well dressed, and fond of social intercourse, an indulgence in which they are seldom restrained by their parents, and which they as seldom turn to abuse. They are here indeed less dependent on, and less subject to, the caprice of parents than elsewhere. Primogeniture entitles to no advantages; but all the children, male and female, share alike in the family property. No parent can disinherit a child without assigning, on proof, one at least of the fourteen reasons enumerated in the Justinian Code. By the law of the colony, a community of all property both real and personal, is supposed to take place on the marriage of two persons, unless the contrary should be particularly provided against by solemn contract made before marriage. Where no such contract exists, the children, on the death of either parent, are entitled to that half of the joint property which was supposed to belong to the deceased, and which cannot be withheld on application after they are come of age.

It is but justice to the young females of the Cape to remark, that many of them have profited much more than could be expected from the limited means of education that the place affords. In the better families, most of them are taught music, and some have acquired a tolerable degree of execution. Many understand the French language, and some have made great proficiency in the English. They are expert at the needle, at all kinds of lace, knoting, and tambour work, and in general make up their own dresses, following the prevailing fashions

of England brought from time to time by the female passengers bound to India, from whom they may be said to

"Catch the manners living as they rise."

Neither are the other sex, while boys, deficient in vivacity or talent; but for want of the means of a proper education, to open their minds and excite in them a desire of knowledge, they soon degenerate into the common routine of eating, smoking, and sleeping. Few of the male inhabitants associate with the English, except such as hold employments under the government. This backwardness may be owing in part to the different habits of the two nations, and partly, perhaps, to the reluctance that a vanquished people must always feel in mixing with their conquerors. No real cause, however, of complaint or disaffection, could possibly be alleged against the English government at the Cape. No new taxes have been imposed since the conquest; but, on the contrary, some of the old ones have been diminished, and others modified. The demand and value of every production of the colony have very considerably increased, while the articles of import have fallen in their prices. More than 200,000 rixdollars of arrears in rent of land have been remitted to the inhabitants by the British government, as well as 180,000 rixdollars of dubious debts. They have preserved their laws and their religion, both of which continue to be administered by their own people. They enjoy as great a share of rational liberty as men, bound to each other, and to the whole, by the ties that a state of society necessarily imposes, could possibly expect, and much greater than under their former government. Property has been secure in every instance, and has been raised

to double its former value: and none has the loss of life of any friend or relation to lament at the time of, or since, the capture. Their paper currency, fabricated by the government in order to get over a temporary distress, but which it had never been able to take out of circulation, bore a depreciation of 40 *per cent.* and a silver dollar was scarcely to be seen. The former is now at par with specie, and not less than two millions of the latter have been sent from England and thrown into circulation. Every person enjoys his share of the general prosperity. The proprietor of houses in town has more than doubled his rent; and the farmer in the country, where formerly he received a rixdollar for each of his sheep, now receives three. Four years of increasing prosperity, of uninterrupted peace and domestic tranquillity, have been the happy lot of the inhabitants of the Cape of Good Hope.

Scenes very different from these would, in all probability, have been exhibited here, had not the English taken possession of the colony at the very time they were ripe for execution. Jacobinism, or subversion of all order, had industriously been propagated by the ill-disposed, among the ignorant part of the colonists, both in the town and country districts. A weak and timid government, instead of crushing it in its infancy, suffered it to grow to maturity. Its principal officers were insulted with impunity. The Landrosts, or Chief magistrates of the police in the country, were driven out of their districts, and the farmers refused to pay the rents of the loan lands. Proscribed lists were actually made out of such as were first to suffer; and the slaves were anxiously waiting for the signal of a general emancipation. Even after the capture, the people of the distant district of Graaf Reynet had indignantly

used, and then turned away, the landrost and the clergyman that had been appointed and sent thither by Sir James Craig, who immediately ordered a detachment of light infantry with a squadron of dragoons to march to the Drosdy. Intimidated at the news of such a measure, they sent a supplicating letter, signed by some of the principal inhabitants, praying that the troops might be recalled, and promising good order and obedience to the laws.

About this time (May 1797) the Earl of Macartney arrived at the Cape to take charge of his government; and one of his first measures was that of sending back to Graaf Reynet the same landrost whom they had expelled, in order to convince them that the British government, though lenient and just in its proceedings, was not less firm in carrying them into execution. In addition to the political motives which induced his excellency to send his own secretary in company with the landrost, he thought it at the same time a fair opportunity for supplying some information respecting the distant parts of the colony, and the countries bordering upon it, hitherto so little visited, and so imperfectly known. His instructions, on this occasion, embraced a variety of objects, as well for the scientific inquirer as for the promotion of the public benefit: and should the following pages be found to contain nothing conducive to the ends proposed by these instructions, the fault must rest solely on the person who had the honour to receive them. As facts locally collected, they have been thought worthy to be laid before the public. The observations and reflections upon the facts are such as occurred when the impression they made, on the spot, was strongest on the mind. Since that time they have undergone but little alteration, and are there-

fore considered as *sketches* only, to be filled up and finished by future travellers: and they are submitted to the public more with the consciousness of truth than of any literary attainments in the writer.

CHAP. II.

Sketches on a journey from The Cape of Good Hope, across the Karroo, or Arid Desert, to the Drosdy of Graaff Reynet.

THOUGH the rains usually commence about the beginning of May, in the present year the whole month of June was a series of fine pleasant weather; unfavourable, however, to the husbandman, and not less so to the traveller, who may have before him a long journey over the uninhabited deserts of Africa, and must necessarily make daily use of the same cattle, either in the team, or to travel along with him as relays. The established mode of performing such long journies, in this colony, is in covered waggons drawn by bullocks. The carriages made for this purpose are very expensive; but they are well constructed to bear hard service, to run light, and are sufficiently commodious and spacious to contain all the necessaries that may be wanted on a long journey, and also a cot, or matrass, for sleeping upon. Such a carriage is commonly drawn by a team, or *span*, as it is termed in the colony, of ten or twelve oxen. Each day's journey is called a *skoff*, and the length of these is generally regulated by local circumstances, being from five to fifteen hours. It is customary also to travel in the night, that the cattle may have the advantage of the day to graze, or rather to brouse, among the shrubbery; for many parts of the country, particularly after a series of dry weather, produce not a single blade of grass. The

bitter, sour, and saline plants, than which the arid soil of an African desert produces nothing better, constitute oft times their only food for weeks together; and to the use of these may probably be owing the offensive breath that the ox of the colony is generally observed to have. In Europe, the sweetness of the breath of horned cattle is almost proverbial. In Africa it is remarked to be altogether as nauseous. The bad quality of the water, which in the desert plains is never met with pure, but impregnated with saline or earthy matter, may also contribute in producing this effect. The speed of an ox in the waggon, where the country is tolerably level, and the surface hard, is full three miles an hour, at which rate he will continue for ten or twelve hours without halting.

The first day of July was fixed upon for our departure from the Cape; and the preceding month was employed in making the necessary preparations, fitting up three waggons, and in procuring draught oxen, which at this season of the year, after the long drought, were scarce and extremely lean. *Bastaards* for drivers, and Hottentots to lead the foremost pair in the team, and to take care of the relays, were very difficult to be procured, but indispensably necessary. Every thing, however, was in readiness on the day fixed, though it was night before the waggons left the town; and the oxen were so miserably bad, that before they had proceeded three miles, two of them dropped in the yokes, and were obliged to be left behind. In seven hours they had only advanced about fifteen miles, to a place called Stickland, where Sir James Craig had caused stabling for seven troops of dragoons, and stone-buildings for the officers and men, to be erected, as a place of great importance in case of an attack from

a powerful enemy. This station is at the south point of a range of hills called the Tigerberg or Tiger Mountain, that terminates, on this side, the sandy isthmus. At the feet of the hills, and in the vallies formed by them, are several pleasant farms, with gardens well stored with vegetables for the table, fruiteries, vineyards, and extensive corn lands. As none of the latter are inclosed, there is a general appearance of nakedness in the country, which, if planted with forest trees, as the oak and the larch, and divided by fences, would become sufficiently beautiful, as nature in drawing the outline has performed her part. The sandy flat, of which the Tigerberg forms the boundary, is applied to no use but that of furnishing a part of the supply of fuel for the town, and for the country people and butchers occasionally to turn their cattle upon. It is a prevailing opinion at the Cape, that this isthmus, which now separates the two principal bays, was once covered with the sea, making, at that time, the Cape promontory a complete island. The flatness and little elevation of the surface, the quantity of sand upon it, and the number of shells buried in the sand, have been urged as the grounds for such a conjecture. If, however, such has been the case, and the retreat of the sea progressive, it is an incalculable period of time since the two bays have been united. The surface is from 20 to 30 feet above the level of high-water mark; the sand upon it, except where it is drifted into ridges, is seldom three feet deep, and generally rests on sand-stone or hard gravel, bound together, and coloured yellow or brown with iron. The vegetable remains, washed by the rains into the hollows, form in places bogs or peat-moss, and the water in them is of a deep claret-colour, and sometimes black. I never met with any shells on any part of the isthmus; but

the presence of these is no argument of their having been brought there by the sea. Many thousand waggon-loads of shells may be met with in various places along the eastern coast, in situations that are several hundred feet above the level of the sea. They are generally found in the greatest quantities in sheltered caverns, a circumstance that might lead to the supposition of the original inhabitants of the country being a sort of Troglodytes, as indeed the savage Hottentots of the interior in some degree still are. The fact is, they are carried from the coast into these elevated situations by the myriads of sea-fowl that frequent the African shores. At Muscle-bay is a remarkable cavern containing an immense quantity of different kinds of shells peculiar to the coast; above the level of which it is not less than three hundred feet; and behind the Lion's Head, at the same height, are beds of shells, buried under vegetable earth and clay. The human mind can form no idea as to the measure of time required for the sea to have progressively retreated from such elevations.

The plain that stretches to the eastward from Tigerberg is less sandy, and better covered with shrubs and plants, than the isthmus, and has a few farms scattered thinly over it near rills of water, that have broken the surface into deep glens in their passage to the northward. On the more arid and naked parts, consisting of yellow clay and sand, are thrown up many thousands of those cellular masses of earth by a small insect of the ant tribe, to which naturalists have given the name of *termes*, different, however, from, and much less destructive than, that species, of which a curious description has been given by Mr. Smeathman in the Philosophical Transactions. The ant-hills in this part of Africa seldom exceed the height of three feet.

The plain to the eastward, at a dozen miles beyond Stickland, is terminated by two mountains, between which the road leads into a valley better cultivated and more thickly inhabited than any part between it and the Cape. Simonsberg, on the right, is among the highest of the mountains that are seen from the Cape. Its forked Parnassian summit is frequently, in winter, covered with snow, and in the south-east winds of summer is generally buried in the clouds. It also has its Helicon trickling down its sides, as yet a virgin spring untasted by the Muses. It held out more charms, it seems, for Plutus, than for Apollo. A man in the time of the governor, whose name the mountain perpetuates, intent on making his fortune by imposing on the credulity and ignorance of the Company's servants, melted down a quantity of Spanish dollars, and presented the mass to the governor as a specimen of silver from a rich mine that he had discovered in this mountain. Enraptured at the proof of so important a discovery, a resolution was passed by the governor in council, that a sum of money should be advanced to the man to enable him to prosecute his discovery, and work the mine, of which he was to have the sole direction; and in the mean time to convince the public of the rising wealth of the colony, the mass of silver was ordered to be manufactured into a chain, to which the keys of the Castle gates should be suspended. The chain was made, and still remains in the same service for which it was originally intended, as a memorial of the credulity of the governor and the council.

The Paarlberg, on the left of the pass into the valley, is a hill of moderate height, and has taken its name from a chain of large round stones that pass over the summit, like the pearls of a necklace.

Of these, the two that are placed near the central and highest point of the range, are called *par excellence*, the pearl and the diamond: and a particular description of them has been thought worthy of a place in the Philosophical Transactions. From that paper, and Mr. Masson's description, it would appear that these two masses of stone rested upon their own bases, and were detached from the mountain; whereas they grow out, and form a part, of it. It has also been said, that their composition was totally different from the rocks that are found in the neighbouring mountains, which led a naturalist in Europe to observe, that these immense blocks of granite had probably been thown up by volcanic explosions, or by some cause of a similar nature. It has been observed in the preceding Chapter, that the sand stone strata of the Table Mountain rested upon a bed of primæval granite, and that an infinite number of large stones were scattered at the feet of the Mountains along the sea-coast, from the Lion's Head to the true Cape of Good Hope. All these are precisely of the same nature, and the same materials, as the pearl and the diamond; that is to say, they are aggregates of quartz and mica; the first in large irregular masses, and the latter in black lumps resembling shorl: they contain also cubic pieces of feltspar, and seem to be bound together by plates of a clayey iron stone. All the stones of this description appear to have been formed round a nucleus, as by the action of the air and weather they fall to pieces in large concentric laminæ. The Pearl is accessible on the northern side, but is nearly perpendicular on all the rest. This sloping side is more than a thousand feet, and the perpendicular altitude about four hundred feet above the summit of the mountain, and the circumference of its base is a full mile. Near the top it is quadrisected by two clifts,

crossing at right angles, in which were growing a number of beautiful aloes, several cryptogamous and other plants. A great part of the slanting side was covered with a species of green lichen. Down the perpendicular sides were immense rifts, as if the mass had been torn asunder by its own weight. The Diamond is the higher block, but less bulky, and, being cone-shaped, is difficult and dangerous to ascend.

The mountain of the Paarl furnishes a fine field for the botanist. The plants are very varied and wonderfully luxuriant. The wild olive of the Cape seems to have here attained its greatest size, and the dark-green foliage is finely contrasted with the elegant tribe of heaths, some of which shoot up to the size and form of trees. The fruit of the wild olive is small and acrid; but the wood is close-grained, shaded, and takes a polish not unlike that of walnut. A great variety of that genus of plants to which botanists have given the name of Protea, decorate the sides of the Paarl Mountain. Of these, one of the most numerous and most conspicuous was the mellifera, called here the sugar-tree, from the great quantity of saccharine juice contained in the bottom of its vase-shaped flowers. Many of the inhabitants are at the trouble of collecting this juice, which is sometimes used as a stomachic, and sometimes boiled down to a thick syrup for the purpose of preserving fruits. Several species of the gaudy-plumed *certhia*, or creeper, come in also for their share, and at this season of the year may be seen in vast numbers perching themselves on the edge of the corollas, and sucking, with their long sickle-shaped bills, " the honied sweets." The iridescent and brilliant colours of these beautiful little birds, fluttering about the variegated blossoms of the pro-

tea, cannot fail to attract the notice of the passenger, for a time, from every other object. One species in particular (the chalybea of Linnæus) commands attention to its clear melodious note. It sings delightfully in the cage, where it is kept with difficulty, existing entirely on sugar and water.

The mountains that form the eastern boundary of the valley, are eminently grand, but are destitute, near their summits, of a shrub, or even a blade of grass. They are a part of that great chain that stretches from False Bay to the northward, and to which a French naturalist has given the name of the Back-bone of the Earth; a name, however, that is much more appropriate by their appearance than great extent. Their naked summits are pointed and jagged, and divided like the vertebræ of the back-bone of an animal. They consist, like the Table Mountain, of a number of sand-stone strata, placed in a horizontal direction, contain a great deal of iron, being in places perfectly red, and they rest upon beds of granite, clay, and slate. This range of mountains, like an immense wall, shuts out entirely from the Cape the countries that lie far beyond it; so completely, indeed, that a few men in possession of the passes, would always be able to cut off all communication between the sea-coast and the interior. Of these passes, or *kloofs* as they are called by the colonists, there are but three that are ever used by wheel-carriages—Hottentot Holland's Kloof near False Bay, which opens a communication with the district of Swellendam and the eastern parts of the colony along the sea-coast: Roode Sand, or red sand, Kloof, opposite to Saldanha Bay, leading to Graaf Reynet, and the remotest parts of the colony; and Eland's Kloof, still

farther north, which opens into a wild and almost uninhabited part of the country.

Though the mountains be wild and barren, nothing could be more beautiful, rich, and well covered, than the vale they inclose, which is well watered by the numberless arms of the Berg river, uniting near the middle, and meandering through it with a smooth and almost imperceptible current. This vale contains the divisions, or parishes, of Great and Little Drakensteen, Fransche Hoek or French corner, and the Paarl. The last is an assemblage of about thirty houses, disposed into two straight lines, and are so far detached from each other, as to form a street about a mile in length. The church stands near the middle. This, as well as most of the houses, is neatly covered with rye-straw: a coating of this thatch, if properly laid on, will last from twenty to thirty years. The houses are generally surrounded with plantations of oaks. The common size of these is from ten to fifteen feet in circumference, and from twenty to thirty feet without a branch: many are much larger: the tops are neither bent, nor is the wood shaken, nor twisted, as of those about Cape Town; a proof that the winds are less violent in this valley than at the latter place.

Fransche Hoek, and the two Drakensteens, have neither church nor any assemblage of houses that deserves the name of village, but are composed of detached farms, dispersed over the vale at considerable distances from each other. Most of these are freehold property, that were granted, in the early stages of the settlement, for certain sums of money, or by favour, or for particular services. They consist each of sixty *morgens* of land, or 120 English acres, and the possessors claim the privilege of the

intermediate waste-land to turn their cattle upon. This is a great abuse, which perhaps would best be checked by obliging the proprietors to inclose their just portion of 120 acres, and would certainly be the means of greatly improving the country.

The chief produce of the valley is wine. At this time they were busily employed in pruning their vines. These are seldom suffered to creep up into frames or standards, as is most common in the southern parts of Europe, but are planted in rows, in the same manner, and about the same size, as currants or gooseberry bushes in England. In this part of the colony, which is not very distant from the Cape-market, there is no kind of produce that so well repays the labour of the farmer as the culture of the grape. On an acre of ground may be planted five thousand stocks of vines, and a thousand of these will generally yield a leaguer or pipe of 154 gallons of wine. The retail price of a leaguer is from 50 to 150 rixdollars, or 10 to 30*l.* sterling. That sort which is commonly drank at table under the name of Cape madeira, now sells at 12*l.* a pipe, as does also a pleasant tart wine not unlike *vin de grave*, called here the Steen wine. Of rich sweet wines the colony produces great variety: a large white Persian grape, called here the *haenapod*, or cock's foot, makes a delicious but expensive wine; the grape being fleshy, is generally planted for the purpose of being converted into raisins. The muscadel gives a different wine at almost every place in which it grows. Nearly all the wines that are made at the Cape, taste either very much of the fruit, or otherwise are meagre or sour. The first may generally be attributed to the must not having undergone a sufficient degree of fermentation to change its nature, but put up into pipes with much of the sac-

charine matter remaining undecomposed. The latter may probably be owing to the practice of pulling the grapes before they are ripe, in order to prevent their being consumed by the numerous tribes of insects that prey upon them, among which the common honey bee is not the least destructive.

The grapes in general that are produced at the Cape, are not inferior to those of any country; and there can be little doubt that the wines expressed from them might, by proper management, be made to rival the best European wines. Some of the farmers have lately turned their attention to the subject, and have found themselves amply repaid for any additional labour and expense they might have incurred in making experiments. Those few also who have attended to the process of distilling spirits from the fruit, have produced brandy of a very good quality. This article is here in general very bad, evidently owing, in a great degree, to the manner in which it is manufactured. In order to get as much spirit as possible, the materials thrown into the still are of the grossest kind, the greatest part being the expressed husks and stalks of the grapes; the apparatus is bad; the conducting of the process is committed to the hands of a slave, who has little knowledge of, and less interest in, the business he is commanded to perform: he falls asleep; the fire goes out; a rapid blaze succeeds to make up for loss of time; the spirit carries over with it a strong empyreumatic flavour, which it never loses. There is, however, notwithstanding every precaution that has hitherto been taken, a very peculiar taste in all the wines and brandies of the Cape, arising probably from the circumstance of the grapes growing so very near the ground. It is well known that the exhalations from the earth are so much imbibed by

the leaves of the tobacco plant which grow nearest to it, that those leaves are always rejected as unfit for use; and it is natural to suppose, that the fruit of the vine hanging very near to, or even resting upon, the ground, will also receive the prevailing flavour exhaling from the soil. It is indolence alone that has hitherto prevented the colonists from leading their vines along standards, in which case they would not only improve the quality of the grape, but would also receive a double quantity from the same ground. The raisins of the Cape are of so good a quality, and can be afforded at so reasonable a rate, that, in all probability, they will hereafter form an article of considerable export. Almonds are also plentiful, large, and good.

The whole valley is convertible into excellent arable land; yet very little corn is cultivated except for home consumption. The tract of country that stretches along the feet of the great chain of mountains from the Paarl to False Bay, including the two Drakensteens, Fransche Hoek, the Drosdy of Stellenbosch, and Hottentots Holland, is chiefly employed in raising wine and fruits for the Cape-market. The quantity of the former amounts annually to about 6000 leaguers.

Hitherto there have been few speculators among the Dutch planters: the spirit of improvement and experiment never entered into their minds; and it may be a matter of doubt, had not the French Protestants, who sought an asylum here from the religious persecutions of their once bigoted countrymen, introduced and cultivated the vine, whether at this time the whole colony would have produced a single leaguer of wine. The sugar-cane grows with health and vigour in several parts of the colony; yet none

of the planters have yet procured a pound of sugar. On asking a farmer, who complained that the canes had overrun his garden, why he did not turn them to some account, he replied with that nonchalance which characterizes the nation, that it served to amuse the women and children; but that he should not be the first to try it, as long as he could buy that article in the Cape for six schillings, or three English shillings, a pound.

Among the thick shrubbery that covers the uncultivated parts of the valley, is an abundance of game, particularly of the Cape partridges, which, fearless of man, run about nearly as tame as poultry in a farm-yard; and of korhaens, the *otis afra* of Linnæus, and white-eared bastard of Latham, which, unlike the partridge, not only fly to a distance at the approach of the sportsman, but keep up, while on the wing, a violent screaming, as if to give notice to other birds of the impending danger. There are also plenty of Cape snipes, *Scolopax Capensis*, and three species of wild ducks, the *anas Capensis*, or Cape widgeon, the Dominican duck, and the common teal. Among the quadrupeds that inhabit the valley are the duiker and the griesbok, already described; and the mountains abound with a curious species of antelope, which, from its amazing agility, is called the *klip-springer*, or rock-leaper. Its cloven hoofs are each of them subdivided into two segments, and jagged at the edges, which gives it the power of adhering to the steep sides of the smooth rock without danger of slipping. The colour is cinereous grey, and its black horns are short, straight, erect, and annulated one third of their length from the base. The hair is very singular, being so brittle that it breaks instead of bending, adheres loosely to the skin, and is so very light that

it is used as the best article that can be procured for stuffing saddles.

A few miles beyond the Paarl, the Berg or Mountain-river crosses the road. It is here so large and deep in the winter season as to make a pont or floating bridge necessary. A little lower down, however, it is sometimes fordable; and the peasants, to avoid the toll at the ferry, frequently cross it, though at the hazard of their own lives and of their cattle. At this time the river was pretty full; yet two farmers, rather than pay four shillings for the passage at the ferry of their two waggons, ventured through at the ford, and passed it with the loss only of two sheep that were worth at least four times the amount of the toll. The road beyond the ferry is excellent, being a level bed of hard clay; but the country is very thinly inhabited. In advancing to the northward the surface has fewer inequalities, and becomes sandy. Nothing, however, like drifts or beds of sand, meets the eye; but, on the contrary, it wanders over an uninterrupted forest of verdure arising from a variety of frutescent plants, among which the tribes of proteas, of heaths, and two species of *scriphium*, called here the rhinoceros-bush, predominate. In those places where the ground is least covered, the hillocks thrown up by the *termites* most abound. Here also, towards the close of the day, a multitude of small land tortoises, the *testudo pusilla* and the *geometrica* of Linnæus, were crawling slowly off the road towards the bushes, having basked themselves in the open sunshine during the day. The howling wolf and the yelping jackall began their hideous cries shortly after the setting of the sun, and seemed to follow us in the night, keeping at no great distance from the waggons. It was near the middle of the night be-

fore we arrived at a solitary habitation, situated in a wild, bleak, open country, and on the borders of a lake called the *Vogel Valley*, or the Bird Lake. The word *valley*, in the colony, implies either a lake or a swamp: at this time the place in question was the latter; but it abounded with ducks, geese, and teal, and also with the great white pelican, the *onocratulus*, and the rose-coloured flamingo. The wings of the latter are converted into fans for flapping away the flies that, in incredible multitudes, swarm in the houses of the peasantry, for want of a proper attention to cleanliness; and the pelican is shot for the sake of the fine soft down which lies under his plumage.

A few miles beyond this lake or swamp brought us to the entrance of Roode Sand Kloef, or the red sandy pass over the great chain of mountains. Here the strata of which they are composed, though of the same nature as the Table Mountain, were not horizontal, but dipped to the south-eastward, making with the horizon an angle of about twenty degrees. The ascent of the Kloef is not steep, but very rugged; and a small river that meanders down it must be crossed several times. The plants, sheltered by the large fragments of rock that have rolled down the mountains, are uncommonly luxuriant. Of these the different species of protea were the most conspicuous; that species of *ricinus* called the Palma Christi, which affords the castor oil, was very plentiful; and the two species of the melianthus grew in every part of the Kloef. The *calla Ethiopica* was every where abundant and in full flower. The baboons, from their concealed dens in the sides of the mountain, laughed, screamed, and uttered such horrible noises, the whole time that the waggons were ascending the pass, that to a stranger,

not knowing from whence they proceeded, they excited no small degree of surprise.

From the upper part of the Kloef there is no descent to the land of Waveren, or, as the division is now called, Roode Sand. The surface of this vale is four or five hundred feet higher than that which lies on the Cape side of the range of mountains. It is bounded on the eastern side by a branch of the same chain, much higher, however, than that through which the pass lies, yet accessible by waggons. The summits of the mountains were buried in snow, and the thermometer at sunrise stood, on the plain, at the freezing point.

The valley of Roode Sand, or Waveren, is a fertile tract of land, well watered by streamlets falling from the inclosing mountains, and produces abundance of corn, some wine, raisins, and other fruits. Several parts are capable of being flooded, and on that account admirably adapted for the cultivation of rice. The Chinese bamboo, a plant not more elegant than it is useful, grows here with great luxuriance, and is employed for whipstocks, and to make frames for the covers of the waggons. The Cape olive grows wild in great abundance, and also the palma christi. Game of various kinds is also plentiful, such as bustards, partridges, snipes, ducks, and mountain geese. Of antelopes they have the duiker, klip-springer, steenbok, griesbok, and reebok. The last is an animal that does not yet appear to have been described in any systematic work. Its size is that of the domestic goat, but it is much more elegantly made. The colour is a bluish grey, the belly and breast white; horns seven or eight inches long, annulated about a third part of the length from the base. Besides these they have the

Cape hare, and an animal that burrows in the ground called the *yzer varke*, or iron hog, the flesh of which, when salted and dried, is esteemed by the Dutch as a great delicacy. It is the *hystrix cristata*, or crested porcupine of Pennant. Several of the farmers breed them; but it is a vicious animal, and not safe to be approached by strangers. The *aard varke*, or earth-hog, the *myrmecophaga Capensis*, or ant-eater of the Cape, is also very common, and, like the porcupine, undermines the ground, seldom quitting its subterranean abode except in the night. The thighs of this animal are sometimes salted, and in that state considered as very good hams.

The valley of Roode Sand is about thirty miles in length, and is inhabited by about forty families.—Quitting this division, the country becomes wild, and almost uninhabited. Bogs, swamps, and morass covered with rushes and sour plants, large tracts of naked hard clay, deep sandy roads, pools of stagnant water, and those infallible indications of a barren soil, hillocks of ants, are the chief objects that meet the eye of the traveller. For several miles together, no human habitation makes its appearance. In this dreary country there was nothing to engage the attention but the vast chain of mountains on the left which we were shortly to pass, and which here began to round off into an easterly direction. This branch was much more wild, lofty, and barren, than that through which the Kloef of Roode Sand opens a passage. They consisted of immense columnar masses of naked sand-stone, of a red ferruginous colour, passing in places into steel-blue. Their corroded and jagged tops, like the battlements of so many towers or minarets, leaned from their bases, and seemed to owe their only support to each other. The strata were here inclined to the

eastward in an angle of about forty degrees, and seemed as if ready to slide down over each other. Still they were uniform, and had evidently never been disrupted by any subterraneous eruption or concussion. On the opposite side of the dale, however, stood a long range of hills, which had every appearance of volcanic origin. Some were perfect cones; others truncated at the summit in the manner of those on which craters are generally found. Hills like these, standing each on its proper base, and so very different from any that had yet been seen, were too interesting to pass. They were found to be composed of quartz, sand-stone, and iron; not, however, stratified like the great chains, but torn and rent into large fragments. There was no lava; nor did it appear that any of the stones had undergone fusion. There was no blue slate in their sides, which most probably would have been the case, had they been thrown up by any subterranean impulse, the whole base of the plain being composed of it.

Within these hills we came to a valley about three miles in length and two in width, having a surface as level as that of a bowling-green. By a strong stream passing from one end to the other, the whole might be laid under water, and converted into most excellent rice grounds. This stream was smoking hot. The springs, by which it was supplied, issued out of the ground at the foot of some hills which formed the head of the valley. They threw up the water with great violence, and with it quantities of small whitish sand, mixed with minute crystals of quartz. The bed of the reservoir, and the channel down which the water was carried across the valley, in a stream strong enough to turn the largest mill in England, were composed of these materials.—

The water was perfectly clear, and deposited not the smallest degree of any kind of sediment, neither in the pool where the springs were, nor by the edges of the stream. A green *Conferva* grew on the margin of both. No change of colour was produced upon the plants and stones with which the water came in contact. With sulphuric acid it deposited no sediment, nor became in the least turbid, nor were blue vegetable colours at all affected by it. No impregnation of any kind was discoverable, in the smallest degree, by the taste. On the contrary, it is considered so pure, that the family living near it, generally employed it for dressing their victuals; and all their linen and coloured clothes were washed in it without sustaining any injury. The thermometer I had with me was graduated only to 140°, to which point it ascended almost instantaneously. The temperature appeared to be very nearly that of boiling water.

The duration of hot springs for ages without any considerable variation in temperature, or in the quantity of water thrown out, is one of those secret operations of nature that has not as yet been satisfactorily explained, but which has baffled, at all times, the speculations of philosophers. The decomposition of pyritical matter, the slacking of lime, and the subterranean furnace, heated with combustible materials, have each had their advocates, but each, when "weighed in the balance, has been found "wanting."

From the hot wells we crossed the Breede, or broad river, and entered a kloef on the opposite, or northern, side of the vale, which opened a passage through the second great chain of mountains. It is called the Hex river's kloef, and is about four

miles in length. The ascent is much less than that of Roode Sand kloef, the fall of the river that meanders through it being not more than 200 feet. The mountains on each side of this pass were wild and naked, but the kloef itself abounded with large frutescent plants. Basking in the sun, on the banks of the river, were a troop of four or five hundred large black baboons, apparently of the species of *Cynocephalus*, which quitted their place with seeming reluctance, grumbling and howling as they scrambled up the sides of the naked rocks.

The head of the kloef opened out into a narrow valley, to which there was no descent. It is about two miles in width and fifteen in length; and the third branch of mountains, on the northern side, were covered half way down from their summits with snow; yet the orange-trees at their feet were loaded with large ripe fruit. Four families, the only inhabitants of this deep valley, constitute a little world of their own: their wants might be as bounded as their horizon, for the fertility of the ground furnishes them with almost every necessary of life. They have plenty of cattle, and also all the different sorts of game that are met with on the other side of the mountains. We saw here some large partridges with red wings, much preferable to the common Cape partridge, and a quadruped called the *Berghaas*, or mountain hare. It was the *Dipus Cafer* of Linnæus, by some called the Cape Gerboa. Like the kangaroo of Botany Bay, it has the hind legs about thrice the length of the fore ones. When pursued, it always takes to the mountains, knowing that the construction of its legs is better adapted to ascend their steep sides than to scour the plains.

All the appearances of Hex-river valley declare it, at one time, to have been a lake, the head of which having given way at the kloef, has suffered the water to force itself out upon the next lower terrace, leaving only a bog in the middle, to which the stoney bases of the mountains shelve on each side. Should the falls of Niagara once sweep away the barrier that occasions them, the lake Erie would then become a plain or valley, like that of the Hex-river, and many others that occur within the chains of mountains in Southern Africa.

At the head of this little valley we were to take leave of every human habitation for at least sixteen days, the time required to cross over the Great Karroo, or arid desert, that lay between us and the distant district of Graaff Reynet. It therefore became necessary to supply ourselves with a stock of provisions, as nothing whatsoever is to be had on the desert, except now and then an antelope. To those travellers who are furnished with a good waggon and a tent, the want of habitations is no great loss; for few of them, behind the first range of mountains, have any sort of convenience, comfort, or even cleanliness. Among the planters of Africa it is true there are some who live in a decent manner, particularly the cultivators of the grape. Many of these are descendants of the French families who, a little more than a century ago, found an asylum at the Cape of Good Hope from the religious persecutions that drove them from their own country. But a true Dutch peasant, or boor as he styles himself, has not the smallest idea of what an English farmer means by the word comfort. Placed in a country where not only the necessaries, but almost every luxury of life might by industry be procured, he has the enjoyment of none of them. Though he

has cattle in abundance, he makes very little use of milk or of butter. In the midst of a soil and climate most favourable for the cultivation of the vine, he drinks no wine. He makes use of few or no vegetables nor roots. Three times a-day his table is loaded with masses of mutton, swimming in the grease of the sheep's tail. His house is either open to the roof, or covered only with rough poles and turf, affording a favourable shelter for scorpions and spiders; and the earthy floors are covered with dust and dirt, and swarm with insects, particularly with a species of the *termes*, which, though not so destructive as some others of this genus, is nevertheless a very troublesome and disagreeable animal. His apartments, if he happens to have more than one, which is not always the case among the grazing farmers, are nearly destitute of furniture. A great chest that contains all his moveables, and two smaller ones that are fitted to his waggon, are the most striking articles. The bottoms of his chairs consist of thongs cut from a bullock's hide. The windows are without glass; or if there should happen to be any remains of this article, it is so patched and daubed as nearly to exclude the light it was intended to admit. The boor, notwithstanding, has his enjoyments: he is absolute master of a domain of several miles in extent; and he lords it over a few miserable slaves or Hottentots without control. His pipe scarcely ever quits his mouth, from the moment he rises till he retires to rest, except to give him time to swallow his *sopie*, or a glass of strong ardent spirit, to eat his meals, and to take his nap after dinner. Unwilling to work, and unable to think; with a mind disengaged from every sort of care and reflection, indulging to excess in the gratification of every sensual appetite, the African peasant grows

to an unwieldy size, and is carried off the stage by the first inflammatory disease that attacks him.

How different is the lot of the labouring poor of England, who for six days in the week are doomed to toil for twelve hours in every day, in order to gain a morsel of bread for their family, and the luxury of a little animal food for the seventh day!

The cultivators of the ground, who inhabit the nearer districts to the town, though something better than the breeders of cattle, live but in a very uncomfortable manner in the midst of profusion. They have little or no society with each other, and every one seems to live solely for himself. Though removed from each other to the distance of several miles, and enjoying the benefit of many thousand acres of land under the rate of a farthing an acre, it is yet a singular fact, that scarcely any two neighbours are found to be on good terms with each other, but are embroiled perpetually in quarrels and disputes about the extent of their farms, or the privilege of a spring or a water-course. One great cause of their endless disputes is the absurd manner of estimating distance by time. The quantity of land in a government farm, according to the established custom of the colony, must be one hour's walk across it. If one farmer is supposed to have put down his *baaken*, or stake, or land-mark, a little too near to that of his neighbour, the *Feldwagt-meester*, or peace-officer of the division, is called in, by the latter, to pace the distance, for which he gets three dollars. If the Feldwagt-meester should happen to regulate his pace to the satisfaction of both parties, the affair is settled; but as this is not always the case, the next step is for the discontented party to apply for a commission, consisting of the Landrost,

two members of the Council, the Secretary of the district, and a Messenger. These gentlemen share fifteen dollars a-day as long as they are out upon the commission to determine how far a man ought to walk in an hour.

The dangerous and difficult roads in every part of the colony, but particularly the kloefs or passes of the mountains, and the still more perilous fords of the rivers, show how very little sense is entertained by the peasantry of public benefits or public conveniences. Each gets over a difficulty as well as he can, and no more is thought about it till it again occurs. An instance appeared of this in crossing the Breede river opposite to Brandt Valley, which is done by means of a small flat-bottomed tub, about six feet by three. In this machine foot passengers hawl themselves over by a rope fixed to two posts, one on each side of the river. When a horse is to cross, the saddle is taken off, the rider gets into the tub, and drags the animal after him. But when a waggon is to be transported, it must first be unladen, and the baggage carried over in the vessel: the carriage is then made fast by one end to this floating machine, and the other is buoyed up by a cask, and in this manner it is dragged over. Thus is half a day consumed in passing a small river of thirty or forty yards at the most in width, when a few planks, properly put together, would enable them to carry over any sort of carriage, cattle, or horses, with safety and convenience, in five minutes.

The women of the African peasantry pass a life of the most listless inactivity. The mistress of the family, with her coffee-pot constantly boiling before her on a small table, seems fixed to her chair like a piece of furniture. This good lady, born in the

wilds of Africa, and educated among slaves and Hottentots, has little idea of what, in a state of society, constitutes female delicacy. She makes no scruple of having her legs and feet washed in warm water by a slave before strangers; an operation that is regularly performed every evening. If the motive of such a custom were that of cleanliness, the practice of it would deserve praise; but to see the tub with the same water passed round through all the branches of the family, according to seniority, is apt to create ideas of a very different nature.—Most of them go constantly without stockings and shoes, even when the thermometer is down to the freezing point. They generally, however, make use of small stoves to place the feet on. The young girls sit with their hands before them as listless as their mothers. Most of them, in the distant districts, can neither read nor write, so that they have no mental resources whatsoever. Luckily, perhaps, for them, the paucity of ideas prevents time from hanging heavy on their hands. The history of a day is that of their whole lives. They hear or speak of nothing but that such-a-one is going to the city, or to church, or to be married, or that the Bosjesmans have stolen the cattle of such-a-one, or the locusts eaten their corn. The young people have no meetings at fixed periods, as in most country-places, for mirth and recreation. No fairs, no dancing, no music, nor amusement of any sort. To the cold phlegmatic temper and inactive way of life may perhaps be owing the prolific tendency of all the African peasantry. Six or seven children in a family are considered as very few; from a dozen to twenty are not uncommon; and most of them marry very young, so that the population of the colony is rapidly increasing. Several, however, of the children die in their infancy, from swellings in the throat,

and from eruptions of the same kind they are subject to in the Cape. Very few instances of longevity occur. The manner of life they lead is perhaps less favourable for a prolonged existence than the nature of the climate. The diseases of which they generally die in the country, are bilious and putrid fevers and dropsies.

The men are in general much above the middle size, very tall and stout, but ill made, loosely put together, aukward, and inactive. Very few have those open ingenuous countenances that among the peasantry of many parts of Europe speak their simplicity and innocence. The descendants of French families are now so intermarried with those of the original settlers, that no distinction, except the names, remains. And it is a remarkable fact, that not a word of the French language is spoken or understood by any of the peasantry, though there be many still living whose parents were both of that nation. Neither is a French book of any kind to be seen in their houses. It would seem as if these persecuted refugees had studied to conceal from their children their unfortunate history and their country's disgraceful conduct.

The means of education, it is true, must be very difficult to be had among a people so widely scattered over a vast extent of country as the peasantry are in the colony of the Cape. Some have a person in the house whom they call the school-master. This is generally a man who had served out his time in the ranks. His employment, in this new situation, is not only to instruct the children to read, to write, to sing psalms, and get by heart a few occasional prayers, but he must also make himself serviceable in other respects. At one place that we

passed, the poor school-master was driving the plough, whilst a Hottentot had the more honourable post of holding and directing it. The children of those who either cannot obtain, or afford to employ, such a person, can neither read nor write; and the whole of their education consists in learning to shoot well, to crack and use with dexterity an enormous large whip, and to drive a waggon drawn by bullocks.

A book of any kind is rarely seen in any of the farmers' houses, except the Bible and *William Sluiter's Gesangen*, or songs out of the Bible, done into verse by the Sternhold and Hopkins of Holland. They affect to be very religious, and carry at least the devotion of religion fully as far as the most zealous bigots. They never sit down to table without a long grace before meat, pronounced with an audible voice by the youngest of the family; and every morning before day-light one of William Sluiter's Gesangen is drawled out in full chorus by an assemblage of the whole family. In their attendance at church they are scrupulously exact, though the performance of this duty costs many of them a journey of several days. Those who live at the distance of a fortnight or three weeks from the nearest church, generally go with their families once a-year.

Rude and uncultivated as are their minds, there is one virtue in which they eminently excel—hospitality to strangers. A countryman, a foreigner, a relation, a friend, are all equally welcome to whatsoever the house will afford. A Dutch farmer never passes a house on the road without alighting, except indeed his next neighbour's, with whom it is ten to one he is at variance. It is not enough to inquire after the health of the family in passing: even on

the road, if two peasants should meet, they instantly dismount to shake hands, whether strangers or friends. When a traveller arrives at a habitation, he alights from his horse, enters the house, shakes hands with the men, kisses the women, and sits down without farther ceremony. When the table is served, he takes his place among the family without waiting for an invitation. This is never given, on the supposition that a traveller in a country so thinly inhabited, must always have an appetite for something. Accordingly, "What will you make use of?" is generally the first question. If there be a bed in the house, it is given to the stranger; if none, which is frequently the case among the graziers of the distant district of Graaff Reynet, he must take his chance for a form, or bench, or a heap of sheep skins, among the rest of the family. In the morning, after a solid breakfast, he takes his *sopie*, or glass of brandy, orders his slave or Hottentot to saddle the horses, shakes hands with the men, and kisses the women: *he* wishes them health, and *they* wish him a good journey. In this manner a traveller might pass through the whole country.

If the economy of the African farmer's house be ill managed, that of his land is equally bad. The graziers indeed, in many places, are not at the trouble of sowing any grain, but exchange with others their cattle for as much as may be necessary for the family consumption. But even those who have corn-farms near the Cape, seem to have no kind of management. They turn over a piece of ground with a huge mis-shapen plough, that requires eight or ten horses, or a dozen oxen, to drag it along: the seed is sown in the broad-cast way, at the rate of about a bushel and a half to an acre; a rude harrow is just passed over it, and they reap

from ten to fifteen for one. No manure comes upon the ground, except a sprinkling for barley. In low situations near rivulets, where the water can be brought upon the ground, they reap from thirty to forty for one. Water in fact is every thing in Southern Africa. Not like the Chinese, whose great art of agriculture consists in suiting the nature and habit of the plant to that of the soil, which he also artificially prepares, the Dutch peasant at the Cape is satisfied if he can command only a supply of water. He bestows no kind of labour on the ground but that of throwing in the seed: the rest is left to chance and the effects of an excellent climate. The time of seeding is in the months of May and June; and of harvest, from November to January. The grain is trodden out by horses on circular floors in the open air: and the straw is left to rot or to be scattered about by the winds.

We remained a couple of days in the Hex-river valley in making preparations for crossing the desert, and in waiting the arrival of two grazing farmers of Graaff Reynet who were to meet us by appointment at this place. These people were not only likely to be useful in pointing out the places where water was generally to be found, but they were also a considerable addition to our strength, in case of an attack from a savage tribe of Hottentots, known in the colony by the name of *Bosjesmans*, or men of the thickets, because, lurking in the cover of the shrubbery, they are said to shoot their poisoned arrows against the unguarded traveller, for the sake of plundering him of his cattle. To oppose these Bosjesmans the farmers generally cross the desert in parties, and strongly armed. The poor savage, driven by imperious want to carry off an ox or sheep to his starving family, who have no other

abode than the caverns of the mountains, often pays in the attempt the forfeit of his life; but it rarely happens that any of the colonists fall by his hands. Yet the name of Bosjesman is held in horror and detestation; and a farmer thinks he cannot proclaim a more meritorious action than the murder of one of these people. A boor from Graaff Reynet being asked in the secretary's office, a few days before we left the town, if the savages were numerous or troublesome on the road, replied, he had only shot four, with as much composure and indifference as if he had been speaking of four partridges. I myself have heard one of the humane colonists boast of having destroyed with his own hands near three hundred of these unfortunate wretches.

The two graziers having joined us with each a waggon, and a numerous family of children, Hottentots, and Kaffers, we proceeded, on the twelfth of July, to the north-east, and in four hours gained the summit of the lowest part of the mountains that inclose the valley. The ascent, which was from terrace to terrace, might be about fifteen hundred feet in the distance of six miles. From the top towards the east there was little or no descent. Here the face of the country began to wear an entire new aspect. All the great chains of mountains gradually disappeared, or were seen only behind sinking into the horizon; and a confined prospect of a rugged surface, broken into hill and dale, presented itself on every side. The eye wandered in vain to seek relief by a diversity of objects. No huge rocks confusedly scattered on the plain, or piled into mountains, no hills clothed with verdure, no traces of cultivation, not a tree nor a tall shrub, appeared to break the uniformity of the surface, nor bird nor beast to enliven the dreary waste. Vegetation was

thinly scattered over a bed of brownish-coloured clay, and the low and stunted plants were almost wholly confined to the succulent tribe. Of these the most common were several species of *mesembryanthemum*, of *euphorbia*, *crassula*, and *cotyledon*. The grand family of *proteas*, and the elegant *erica*, had totally disappeared. The road was tolerably good, being carried generally over a bed of sand-stone crossed with veins of fat quartz, and a kind of ponderous iron-stone.

Having travelled about seven hours, in which time the oxen had not proceeded above fifteen miles, we entered a long narrow pass made by two hills: the faces of these being nearly perpendicular and straight, gave to the eye a long natural perspective, like that of a street, a name which in fact the place bore. The farther extremity of the pass opened upon a level plain, inclosed by small hills, all detached from each other, and having every appearance of a volcanic origin, except that the sand-stone strata, which showed themselves on every side, were regular and undisturbed. The inclination of these in a considerable angle to the horizon, and the form of the hills, made it appear, from certain points of view, as if a spiral line of stone twisted itself round their sides like the ridge that encircles some of the volute shells. Farenheit's thermometer stood at 33° at sun-rise; at noon, exposed to the sun, at 80°, in the shade 55°; and at seven in the evening it was down at the freezing point.

The next day's journey was about five-and-twenty miles, to a place called *Constaaple*, after a Bastaard Hottentot who had been tempted by a small spring of water to erect a hut and plant a few trees. The drought, however, had soon obliged him to quit

this retreat. Two spreading oaks still remained and shaded a spring of excellent water, which, however, soon lost itself in the sandy surface of the ground. The thermometer at noon rose to 80° in the sun, and at night was down to the freezing point.

On the fourteenth we travelled only twelve miles. The road, in some places, was rocky and uneven, and in others deep sand. Our oxen too were beginning to droop for want of pasturage. The stage called *Mentjies hoek* afforded a few rushes and abundance of succulent plants, among which the bullocks of Africa are accustomed to brouze for want of grass: not a blade of any kind had appeared since we entered upon the desert; and shrubbery was very thinly scattered over the surface, except in the neighbourhood of the few springs that here and there occurred. At this place were the remains of a hut and a solitary oak overhanging a spring of clear water. Even these objects served, in some degree, to enliven, and to break, the uniformity of a barren desert. To the southward, also, now began to appear the blue summits of that barren chain of mountains, mentioned in the preceding Chapter under the name of Zoaarteberg. A butcher of the Cape passed our encampment with about five hundred head of cattle and five thousand sheep, that he had purchased in the Sneuwberg, or snowy mountains. The sheep were in tolerable good condition; but the cattle were miserably poor. As the greatest part of the beeves that are killed at the Cape must travel from Graaff Reynet across this desert, it cannot be a matter of surprise that the Cape beef should be universally complained against. The knife is generally put into them the moment they arrive from a journey of forty or fifty days, in which, beside the fatigue of travelling, they have been exposed to the

scorching rays of the sun at one season of the year, and the intense cold of the nights in the other, without any kind of shade or shelter; without any kind of food but the salt, acrid, and watery leaves of the different succulent plants that almost exclusively grow on the Karroo; sometimes whole days without a drop of water, and most commonly such only as is muddy and saline: sometimes their hoofs become so tender by travelling upon the hot sand and gravel, that they are obliged to be left on the desert; and they generally arrive at the town in so maimed and miserable a condition, as to be very unfit for what they are intended. Could the farmers near the Cape be once prevailed upon to sow turnips, which may be produced here equally good as in Europe, to plant potatoes, and cultivate the artificial grasses, the quality of the beef and mutton might be very materially improved. Those few inhabitants who stall-feed their cattle, have their tables supplied with beef little, if at all, inferior to what is sold in Leadenhall market; but the adoption of such a system would require more labour and activity, and more attention, than the body and mind of a Dutch farmer seem capable of supplying: his avarice, though great, is yet overcome by the habits of indolence in which he has been educated.

On the fifteenth, from the exhausted state of our oxen, three of which we had been obliged to leave behind, we made only a short stage of ten or twelve miles to the *riet fonteyn*, or the red spring, which took its rise out of a high cone-shaped hill, with a flat top, and ran in a feeble stream to the southward. The banks were skirted by a thicket of the *doorn boom*, or thorn-tree, a species of *mimosa*, called erroneously by the two Swedish travellers, who have published their researches in Southern Africa, the

nilotica, or that which produces the gum Arabic. The pods of this are very long, and moniliform, or divided like a string of beads; whereas the karroo mimosa has short sickle-shaped pods. Armed from the summit down to the ground with enormous double thorns, pointing in every direction "like quills upon the fretful porcupine," it makes an impenetrable thicket to most animals except the rhinoceros, whose hide, though not proof against a musket-ball, as has been asserted by a great naturalist, has little to fear from the spines of the mimosa. The bark, being powerfully astringent, is preferred to that of any other tree in the colony for preparing leather from raw skins; and the wood, being hard and tough, is used for waggon-poles, and as lock-shoes for the wheels. The trunk of the tree gives out great quantities of a clear transparent gum, which, however, does not seem to have been applied to any kind of use. It is remarkable that almost every tree which furnishes tasteless gums or resins, is covered with a bark that is highly astringent and austere to the taste.

The following day we crossed the bed of the Buffalo river, which was at least fifty yards in width; but the quantity of water in it was barely sufficient to form a current. The deep shelving banks, however, and the wreck of roots and shrubs, indicated at least its periodical power, which had forced through the *black mountains* to the southward a grand chasm in its passage to the eastern ocean. The whole surface of the country was here strewed over with small fragments of a deep purple-coloured slate, that had crumbled away from the strata which in long parallel ridges lay in the direction of east and west. Scattered among these fragments were black tumified stones that had much the appearance of

volcanic sluggs, or the scoriæ of an iron furnace. Several hills of the shape of cones, some truncated near the top parallel to their bases, stood detached from each other on the plain, apparently thrown up by volcanic explosions; but a nearer view of the alternate strata of earth and sand-stone, regularly disposed in every part, showed them to be the effect of water and not of fire. This part of the desert was more sterile and naked than had yet occurred. Scarcely a plant of any description threw its feeble leaves out of the slaty surface, except a few species of the mesembryanthemum, among which was one more luxuriant than the rest, whose leather-like covering of its fleshy cylindrical leaves served our Hottentots, when dried, for tinder.

About ten miles beyond the Buffalo river we encamped for the night upon the banks of a small running brook called *Geel-beck*, winding round a flat sandy marsh overgrown with rushes, and abounding with springs whose waters were strongly impregnated with salt. All the naked sandy patches were thinly sprinkled over with a fine white powdery substance not unlike snow: it was found in the greatest quantities where the cattle of travellers had been tied up at nights; and it was observed almost invariably to surround the roots of a frutescent plant that grew here in great exuberance. I collected a quantity of this white powder, together with the sand, and by boiling the solution and evaporating the water, obtained from it crystals of pure prismatic nitre. A small proportion of a different alkaline salt was also extracted from the liquor. The plant alluded to was a species of *salsola*, or saltwort, with very minute fleshy leaves closely surrounding the woody branches. It is known to the country-people by the Hottentot name of *Canna*,

and is that plant from the ashes of which almost all the soap that is used in the colony, is made. These ashes, when carefully burnt and collected, are a pure white caustic alkali, a solution of which, mixed up with the oily fat of the large broad tails of the sheep of the colony, and boiled slowly for five or six days, takes the consistency and the quality of an excellent white soap. This salsola grows in almost every part of Southern Africa, but particularly on those plains known by the name of Karroo, and in such abundance, that, supposing the plant, after being cut down and burnt, to be re-produced in five years, the quantity of soda, or barrilla, that might annually be made from the ashes, would be sufficient, beside serving the colony, for the whole consumption of Great-Britain: and as enormous sums of money have always been, and continue to be, drawn from England to pay the imports of this article, it may perhaps be considered as an object worthy of further inquiry. According to the present system, however, of letting out the government farms, and the high price of labour, none of the country-people would find it worth their consideration as an article to bring to market. The Hottentots, indeed, might be encouraged to prepare it; but the great distance from Cape Town, the only market in the colony, and the badness of the roads, will always operate against a supply of the natural products of the country being had there at any reasonable rate. Another shrubby plant with glaucus spear-shaped leaves, is generally met with growing among the salsola, the ashes of which also give a strong alkaline lie; but the soap made from these is said to have a blueish colour, and to be of a very inferior quality to that made from the former. The plant was not in flower; but it appeared to be the *atriplex albicans*, a kind of orache.

The hills that surrounded the plain of Geel-beck, were composed of a dark purple-coloured slate; and among these were seen prancing a small herd of that beautifully-marked animal the *zebra*, and a great number of another species of wild horse, known in the colony by the Hottentot name of *qua-cha*. This animal was long considered as the female zebra, but is now known to be a species entirely distinct. It is marked with faint stripes on the four quarters only; is well shaped, strong limbed, not in the least vicious, but, on the contrary, is soon rendered by domestication mild and tractable: yet, abundant as they are in the country, few have given themselves the trouble of turning them to any kind of use.—They are infinitely more beautiful than, and fully as strong as, the mule; are easily supported on almost any kind of food, and are never out of flesh. The zebra has obtained the character of being so vicious and ungovernable, as never to be completely tamed; perhaps only from some very imperfect and injudicious trials. The success of an attempt to domesticate animals that are naturally fierce or timid, would require more perseverance and patience, more labour, and more address, than seem to fall to the share of a Dutch peasant. A vicious animal, taken from a state of nature, is not to be tamed with the point of a knife, nor with stripes; they are more impatient of pain than such as are already rendered docile and accustomed to the cruelties exercised upon them by man; and wounds and harsh treatment serve only to make them more fierce and unmanageable. At the landrost's of Zwellendam I saw a male and female zebra, that, while young and attended to, were said to have been mild and docile; but by neglect, and probably by teazing, had become exceedingly vicious. One of the English dragoons persisted in mounting the female. She kicked

and plunged, and laid herself down, but to no purpose; the man kept his seat; till taking a leap from the high bank of the river, she threw him into the water; but, holding fast by the bridle, she had no sooner dragged him to the shore, than, walking up quietly to him, she put her head down to his face and completely bit off his ear.

On many parts of the great deserts ostriches were seen scouring the plains and waving their black and white plumes in the wind, a signal to the Hottentots that their nests were not far distant, especially if they wheeled round the place from whence they started up: when they have no nest, they make off, immediately on being disturbed, with the wing-feathers close to the body. There is something in the economy of this animal different in general from that of the rest of the feathered race. It seems to be the link of union, in the great chain of nature, that connects the winged with the four-footed tribe. Its strong-jointed legs and cloven hoofs are well adapted for speed and for defence. The wings and all its feathers are insufficient to raise it from the ground; its camel-shaped neck is covered with hair; its voice is a kind of hollow mournful lowing, and it grazes on the plain with the qua-cha and the zebra. Among the very few polygamous birds that are found in a state of nature, the ostrich is one. The male, distinguished by its glossy black feathers from the dusky grey female, is generally seen with two or three, and frequently as many as five, of the latter. These females lay their eggs in one nest, to the number of ten or twelve each, which they hatch all together, the male taking his turn of sitting on them among the rest. Between sixty and seventy eggs have been found in one nest; and if incubation has begun, a

few are most commonly lying round the sides of the hole, having been thrown out by the birds on finding the nest to contain more than they could conveniently cover. The time of incubation is six weeks. For want of knowing the ostrich to be polygamous, an error respecting this bird has slipt into the *Systema Naturæ*, where it is said that one female lays fifty eggs.

The eggs of the ostrich are considered as a great delicacy. They are prepared in a variety of ways; but that made use of by the Hottentots is perhaps the best: it is simply to bury them in hot ashes, and through a small hole made in the upper end, to stir the contents continually round till they acquire the consistence of an omlet: prepared in this manner, we very often, in the course of our long journies over the wilds of Africa, found them an excellent repast. In these eggs are frequently discovered a number of small oval-shaped pebbles, about the size of a marrowfat pea, of a pale yellow colour, and exceeding hard. In one egg were nine, and in another twelve, of such stones.

At this place it was considered prudent to furnish our Hottentots, who attended the cattle, with firearms, having of late been much infested by parties of Bosjesmen. They had not been out with the oxen above an hour, before they were seen returning with six strangers under their guard. They were not, however, Bosjesmen, but three runaway slaves, and three Hottentots, one of the latter of which was a girl about twelve years of age. This party had lived for some time upon the desert entirely on animal food, which they had procured by lurking near the usual halting-places of butchers and farmers, and driving off in the night-time a few

sheep. Tired of such a mode of life, they were very glad to escape from it by entering into the list of our attendants.

On the seventeenth we proceeded about twenty-four miles over a rising country, finely marked by hill and dale, but altogether barren, except that here and there were straggling over the surface a few species of the mesembryanthemum, or fig marygold, among which were large patches of the curious and elegant ice-plant. At night the thermometer was down to the freezing point, and the following morning it had descended to 30°. The Black Mountains, about fifteen miles to the southward, had lost that part of their character to which perhaps they owed their name, and were covered with deep snow. The nights had been so intensely cold and piercing, since we entered upon the desert, that our horses, being accustomed to the stable, immediately grew sick and low-spirited, and two of them this day fell under the severity of the weather. A third had a very narrow escape. We lost several of our oxen; but these died rather for want of food than from the coldness of the nights.

On the eighteenth we crossed the *Dwyka*, or Rhinoceros river, and encamped on its banks. The bed of the river was a fine-grained blue sand, and it generally exceeded a hundred yards in width; but the collected streamlets, creeping over its surface, would scarcely have furnished a quantity of water sufficient to turn a mill. The rivers that cross the Karroo have this difference, which distinguishes them from rivers in general, that, notwithstanding all the tributary streamlets that may fall into them, the greater the distance from the source, the less water they contain. As it seldom rains on the desert, they have no supply but from the springs; and

the water, in its passage from these, is continually losing of its bulk both by absorption and by evaporation. Though the surrounding country was destitute of vegetation, a thick forest of mimosas covered the banks of the Dwyka, and followed it through all its windings. This plant grows indeed on every part of the desert, on which it is the inseparable companion of all the rivers and all the periodical streamlets. Should a traveller happen to be in want of water, the appearance of the mimosa is a sure guide to the place where it (occasionally at least) is to be found.

On the evening of the nineteenth we encamped upon the banks of the *Ghamka*, or Lion's river.—The distance from the Dwyka is about twenty miles of the most beautiful road I ever beheld. There was neither stone nor loose sand, nor rut, to break the equality of the surface, which was as level as that of a bowling-green, and consisted of a hard bed of clay bound together, and coloured brown, with iron. Not a swell of any sort intervened to interrupt the line of the horizon, which was as perfect as that viewed over the surface of the sea. Here, too, as on that element, the mind was as little distracted by a multiplicity of objects; for in vain did the eye wander in search of tree, or lofty shrub, or blade of grass, or living creature. On every side a wide-spreading plain, barren as its southern boundary the Black Mountains, presented nothing but a dreary waste, "a land of desolation." On approaching the river Ghamka, the face of the country changed a little for the better. Large mimosas skirted its banks, among which were also mingled a species of willow with a narrow serrated leaf, a *rhus*, and the *lyceum afrum*. A considerable stream of water rolled over the bed of the river. Here

we met with hares, partridges, mountain geese, and wild ducks of two kinds, in great abundance. The blue schistus broke out on the banks of the river, and still continued to run directly east and west in parallel ridges.

That part of the Lion's river where we were encamped, was distant only about twelve miles from a chasm or kloof in the Zwarteberg, in the very mouth of which was said to be a farm-house, and several others behind the mountains. As these houses all belonged to the district of Graaff Reynet, the landrost was not without hopes of procuring the loan of fresh teams of bullocks. Many of our own had already died, others were left on the desert, and the rest were quite exhausted by the effects of the cold, of bad water, and little food. We therefore quitted the direct road, and turned off towards Zwarteberg. A few miles before we arrived at the kloof, a party of men, mounted on horseback, were observed to be making for the waggons in full gallop. In coming up with the first, they stopt short and fired a discharge of musquetry. They loaded again, rode up to the second, and fired a second volley: this they repeated before every waggon, and then set off in full gallop the same way they had approached, and were out of sight in a few minutes. This manœuvre was intended as doing honour to the landrost; and such a welcome reception, so very different from that he had experienced on a former occasion from the inhabitants of the first division of his district, was no bad omen of the change of sentiments, or of conduct at least, that had taken place since his expulsion.

After a journey of nine days over a dreary and barren desert, the traces of human industry, though

in a wild sequestered corner, hemmed in by huge barren mountains, had no less charms than the discovery of land, after a long sea-voyage, to the weary passenger. We found here not only a most friendly reception, but also such refreshments as we began to be in want of. Two kinds of wine, the produce of the place, were very tolerable. Various sorts of fruits, all of good quality. The oranges were already ripe and gathered, and the peach and almond trees were in full blossom. Vegetables were unusually luxuriant in their growth: some of the cauliflowers measured eighteen inches in diameter. The rapidity of vegetation, at this place, appeared the more remarkable on account of its situation at the feet of mountains whose summits were buried in snow. It was, however, exposed only to the warm north, and completely screened from all other winds. The thermometer, during the three days we remained here, was never lower than 46°, at the same time that the appearance of the weather indicated a severe frost every night at the distance of a very few miles on the desert.

The mistress of the mansion, at the age of sixty, and the mother of sixteen children, was a tall, straight, well-looking, and active woman; and all the people, who made their appearance from the Black Mountains, were of a stature much exceeding the common size of man. The peasantry of the colony have always been represented as a gigantic race of men. Living nearly in a state of nature, with the advantage of having at all times within their reach a supply of food, procured without bodily exertion or the fatigue of labour, they sometimes attain the greatest possible size to which the species seems capable of arriving.

From this place may be seen to the northward, across the Karroo plains, the chain of mountains which forms the highest step or terrace that has yet been ascended by European travellers. The desert rises towards them in a fine swell that is clearly perceptible to the eye. An attempt to estimate the height of the *Nieuwveld Mountains*, by having merely passed over the country, can be considered as little better than a guess. I should suppose, however, from attending to the general slope of the country to the northward, as well as the sudden elevations from one terrace to another, that the summit of this screen of mountains cannot be less than ten thousand feet above the level of the sea. Snow falls upon them to the depth of five or six feet, and continues to bury them for as many months. The inferior range of Zwarteberg was at this time, for a considerable distance from the summit, covered with snow. These mountains were apparently composed of the same materials as those already passed; but the detached hills, near their base, consisted entirely of that species of rock called by Mr. Kirwan the *amygdaloid*, which is nearly allied to the stone that the miners of Derbyshire have distinguished by the name of *toad-stone*. The rounded pebbles, embedded in this argillaceous matrix, were almost invariably tinged with a bright grass-green colour. The substratum of the mountains still continued to be a blue and purple-coloured schistus.

Having completed our stock of provisions, and procured from the inhabitants of Zwarteberg the loan of sixty stout bullocks, we once more launched upon the wide desert, and proceeded, on the twenty-third, near thirty miles to a spring of water called the *Sleutel fonteyn*, and the following day encamped on the banks of the *Traka* or Maiden river. The

little water it contained was both muddy and salt, and the sand on its banks was covered with a thin pellicle of nitre, out of which was growing abundance of the salsola before mentioned.

At sun-rise this morning the thermometer was down to five degrees below the freezing point. This great diminution of temperature appeared the more extraordinary, as no change, either in the direction or the strength of the wind, had taken place. The air was clear and serene, without a cloud in the sky, and the weather apparently the same it had been for several days in every respect, except in the degree of temperature. The snow on the mountains could have had little influence. The Black Mountains only were near, and they were to leeward; the light wind that blew being from the west, in which quarter scarcely a hillock occurred for the space of an hundred miles.

On the twenty-fifth we skirted the banks of the Traka about ten miles, passed the *Ghowka* or Boor's river, which was perfectly dried up, and in the evening arrived at the *Great Loory fonteyn*, in which was only a very small quantity of water standing in holes, and this was muddy, salt, and bitter. As there was neither herbaceous nor shrubby plants, and as, since our departure from Zwarteberg, the oxen had scarcely tasted vegetable food, for, independent of the litttle time allowed them to brouse, the desert offered only the shrivelled stems of the mesembryanthemum tribe, it was thought adviseable to continue our journey, though in the dark, in search of a better place for the refreshment of our cattle: and as there was reason to suspect that it would be some time before we should meet with water, we filled our casks with the execrable mixture of the Great Loory fon-

teyn. In the middle of the night we arrived at a place where once had flowed a rill of water, and where still were growing clumps of mimosas, patches of the salsola, and a few other succulent plants. These, like some animals that are said to have the faculty of supplying their own nutriment, are capable of existing for a length of time by the juices which their own roots throw out. Our oxen devoured them with great avidity; and the horses made a hearty meal on the branches of the mimosa, at the expense of a considerable quantity of blood which the strong sharp thorns drew from their mouths. The acrid juices of the succulent plants, and the sour herbage of Africa, oblige the cattle to make use of various correctives; and in the choice of these they are not very nice. Old rags, pieces of leather, skins with the hair on them, dried wood, bones, and even small pebbles and sand, are greedily devoured by them. African horses very commonly eat their own dung; and numbers have been destroyed in consequence of taking into the stomach vast quantities of flinty sand.

From the *Little Loory fonteyn*, the place where we halted for the refreshment of our cattle upon the shrubbery that grew there, we advanced on the following day near thirty miles over a bed of solid clay, and late at night pitched our tent in the midst of a meadow covered completely with herbage knee-deep. A transition so sudden from unbounded barrenness, that on every side had appeared on the preceding day, to a verdant meadow clothed by the most luxuriant vegetation, felt more like enchantment than reality. The hungry cattle, impatient to satisfy the cravings of nature, made no small havoc in liberating themselves from the yokes and traces. The name of this spot was *De Beer*

Valley: it was a plain of several miles in diameter, stretching along the feet of the Black Mountains, and seemed to be the reservoir of a number of periodical rivers, whose sources are in the mountains of *Nieuveldt*, of *Winterberg*, and *Camdeboo*. One of these, running at this time with a considerable current, was as salt as brine. To the taste it appeared to be as strongly impregnated as the water of the English Channel; that is to say, it might contain about a thirtieth part of its weight of salt. Another river, with little current, called the *Karooka*, joined the salt river at the head of the valley, the water of which was perfectly fresh, but combined with earthy matter. The surface of the valley was entirely covered with two or three species of coarse rushy grasses; and all the swamps and springs were buried in large clumps of the *arundo phragmites* or common reed. The streams that fell into the valley were finely skirted with tall mimosas, which, at their confluence, spread out into a forest of evergreens.

Such a delightful spot in the midst of a barren desert, affording shelter, and food, and water, could not fail of attracting to it the native inhabitants of the surrounding country; and here accordingly we met with vast variety of game, particularly of the antelope family, three different species of which we had not before observed. These were the *springbok* or leaping antelope, the *pygarga* of the *Systema Naturæ*, the *gems-bok* or *pasan* of *Buffon*, the *Egyptian antelope* of Pennant, and the *oryx* of the *Systema Naturæ*, and the *koodoo*, the *strepsiceros* of Pallas.

The spring-bok is a gregarious animal never met with but in large herds, some of which, according to the accounts of the peasantry, will amount to the

number of ten thousand. The Dutch have given a name to this beautiful creature indicative of its gait. The strength and elasticity of the muscles are so great, that, when closely pursued, he will spring at a single leap from fifteen to five-and-twenty feet. Its usual pace is that of a constant jumping or springing, with all the four legs stretched out and off the ground at the same time, and at every spring the hair on the rump divides or sheds, and, falling back on each side, displays a surface of snowy whiteness. No dog can attempt to approach the old ones; but the young kids, which were now numerous, were frequently caught after a hard chase. Both old and young are excellent venison; and vast numbers are destroyed by the Dutch farmers, not only for the sake of the flesh, but also for the skins, of which they make sacks for holding provisions and other articles, clothing for their slaves; and, at the time of the capture by the English, for themselves also and children. The poverty and miserable condition of the colony were then so great, that all their numerous flocks and herds were insufficient to procure them decent clothing.

The gemsbok is also a very beautiful animal, and of a size much larger than the springbok. It has none of that timidity which generally marks the character of the antelope; but, on the contrary, if closely pursued or wounded, will coolly sit down on its haunches, and keep both sportsman and dogs at bay. Its long, straight, sharp-pointed horns, used in defence by striking back with the head, make it dangerous to approach. Dogs are very frequently killed by it; and no peasant, after wounding the animal, will venture within its reach till it be dead, or its strength at least exhausted. The flesh of the gemsbok is reckoned to be the best venison that Africa produces.

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The koodoo is still larger than the gemsbok, being about the height of a common-sized ass, but much longer. Its strong spiral horns are three feet in length, and seem to be very ill adapted for the convenience of the animal in the thick covert which it constantly frequents. The hind part of the dusky mouse-coloured body has several clear white stripes, and different from most of the genus: on the neck is a short mane: the flesh is dry and without flavour.

The beds of sand, upon the margin of the valley, were all covered with saltpetre as white as snow. The production of this substance has certainly an influence upon the temperature of the air, causing a considerable degree of cold. A full hour after the sun had risen the thermometer stood, in the shade, at 26°, or six degrees below the freezing point. At Little Loory fonteyn, where the soil was hard, dry, and stony, it was ten degrees above freezing; and about the same time on the preceding morning, on the banks of the Traka, where there was also much nitre, the mercury was five degrees below the freezing point. The weather during the three days was perfectly clear, and the wind had not shifted a point. That the great changes in the temperature of the air upon the desert, whilst the weather apparently remains the same, arise from some local rather than general cause, is pretty evident from another circumstance: in travelling at night upon the Karroo, if the wind should happen to blow upon the side, it is very common to pass through alternate currents of hot and cold air, whose difference of temperature is most sensibly felt. Whether the cooler columns of the atmosphere may have been owing to the subjacent beds of nitre, which frequently occur on the Karroo plains, or to some re-

moter cause, I have no grounds sufficiently strong to determine; but a variety of circumstances seem to favour the former supposition.

In looking through the exhalations of these beds of nitre, a meteorological phenomenon, of a different nature, was also here accidentally observed. In marking about sunrise the bearing by a compass of a cone-shaped hill that was considerably elevated above the horizon, a peasant well acquainted with the country observed, that it must either be a new hill, or that the only one which stood in that direction, at the distance of a long day's journey, must have greatly increased of late its dimensions. Being directed to turn his eyes from time to time towards the quarter on which it stood, he perceived, with amazement, that, as the day advanced, the hill gradually sunk towards the horizon, and at length totally disappeared. The errors of sight, occasioned by the refractive power of the air, are so singular, and sometimes so very extraordinary, as hitherto to have precluded the application of any general theorem for their correction, as it is not yet ascertained even through what medium rays of light, in their passage, suffer the greatest and least degree of refraction. Were this precisely known, observations on the subject might lead to a more intimate knowledge of the nature of the different currents of air that float in the atmosphere, and without doubt are the cause of extraordinary appearances of objects viewed through them. A gentleman to whom the world is much indebted for his many ingenious and useful inventions and discoveries, once proposed to determine the refractive power of different liquids and aeriform fluids; and it is to be hoped he still means to prosecute a course of experiments on a subject of so much importance and curiosity.

Our cattle being well refreshed on the meadows of De Beer Valley, we advanced about twenty miles, and encamped for the night on the banks of Hottentot's river, in the narrow deep channel of which were only a few stagnant pools of muddy water. Here we were met by some of the inhabitants of Camdeboo, who, being apprised of the approach of the landrost, had come a two days' journey, and brought with them several teams of large fat oxen to hasten his arrival at the Drosdy, where he was informed the orderly and well-disposed part of the district were anxiously expecting him.

On the twenty-eighth we pitched our tents at the *Poort*, so called from a narrow passage through a range of hills that branch out from the mountains of Camdeboo and run across the desert. The plains were here a little better covered with shrubbery, and abounded with duikers and steen-boks, whole herds of spring-boks, and qua-chas and ostriches.

A heap of stones, piled upon the bank of a rivulet, was pointed out to me as the grave of a Hottentot; and on inquiring from our people of this nation if the deceased had been some chief, they informed me that no distinction was conveyed after death; and that the size of the heap depended entirely upon the trouble that the surviving friends chose to give themselves. The intention, it seemed, of the pile was very different from that of the monuments of a similar kind that anciently were erected in various parts of Europe, though they very probably might have proceeded, in a more remote antiquity, from the same origin, which was that of preventing the wolves, or jackals, or other ravenous beasts from tearing up and mangling the dead carcase. The progressive refinement of society con-

verted, at length, the rude heap of stones, originating in necessity, into the sculptured marble, the useless flatterer of vanity.

Though the Poort may be considered as the entrance into Camdeboo, the first habitation is twelve miles beyond it, and the second ten miles beyond the first. No others appeared either to the right or to the left, and the surface of the country was just as barren and naked as any part of the Karroo. The third farm-house we passed was fifteen or sixteen miles beyond the second; and no other occurred between this and the Drosty, or the residence of the landrost, which was about ten miles farther. It was late in the evening of the thirtieth before we arrived at this village, at the entrance of which the landrost was received by a body of farmers on horseback, who welcomed him by a discharge of several platoons of musquetry.

CHAP. III.

Sketches on a Journey into the Country of the Kaffers.

IMMEDIATELY after our arrival at Graaff Reynet, the Provisional Landrost, in his list of grievances under which the district was then labouring, represented the deplorable state of some of its dependencies, from the incursions of the tribe of people known by the name of Kaffers. Certain chiefs of this nation, he said, with their families, and vassals, and cattle, were overrunning the country: some had even advanced as far as the borders of the district of Zwellendam; others had stationed themselves on the banks of the *Sondag*, or Sunday river, within fifty or sixty miles of the Drosdy; but that the great bulk of them were in that division of the district called the *Zuure-veldt*, or Sour Grass plains, which stretch along the sea-coast between the Sunday and the Great Fish rivers: that an inhabitant of *Bruyntjes Hoogté*, another division of the district, who, during the late disturbances and anarchy in the affairs of Graaff Reynet, had on all occasions used a dictatorial language and acted a busy part, had now sent him a letter, demanding that the command should be given to him of a detachment of the farmers against a party of Kaffers who had passed the borders of this division of the district with three or four thousand head of cattle: that he, the provisional landrost, had, from certain intelligence of the coming of the actual landrost, fortunately withheld his an-

swer to the said letter; for, in the present state of affairs, he would not have dared to give a refusal: to all the measures of the leading party he had been compelled to assent: he had in fact been forced by the anarchists, by way of giving a kind of sanction to their proceedings, to take upon him the title of an office, the duties of which he was neither qualified, nor indeed suffered, to perform.

The first business, therefore, of the landrost, after his arrival at the Drosdy, was to stop the preparations of the farmers for making war against the Kaffers, by letting them know that it was his intention to pay a visit to the chiefs of that nation, and to prevail on them, if possible, to return quietly and peaceably into their own country beyond the settled limits of the Great Fish river. This, no doubt, was an unwelcome piece of intelligence to the writer of the letter, and to those of the intended expedition, who were to share with him the plunder of the Kaffers' cattle, which, in fact, and not any laudable motive for the peace and welfare of the district, was the mainspring that operated on the minds of those who had consented to take up arms against them. To the avaricious and covetous disposition of the colonists, and their licentious conduct, was owing a serious rupture with this nation in the year 1793, which terminated with the almost total expulsion of the former from some of the divisions of the district: and though in the same year the treaty was renewed which fixed the Great Fish river to be the line of demarcation between the two nations, and the Kaffers retired within their proper limits, yet few of the colonists returned to their former possessions, particularly those in the Zuure Veldt; a circumstance, no doubt, that induced the former once more to transgress the fixed boundary. So

long as they remained in small numbers in these forsaken parts, and during the confusion in the affairs of Graaff Reynet, little notice had been taken of their encroachments; but of late they had poured over in such multitudes, and had made such rapid advances towards the interior and inhabited parts of the district, levying at the same time contributions of oxen and sheep on those colonists whose habitations they approached in their passage through the country, that the affair was become seriously alarming.

As soon therefore as the landrost should have held a meeting of the inhabitants to administer to them the oath of allegiance to His Majesty, to read his commission, appoint the Hemraaden, or members of the Council, and settle some other necessary business at the Drosdy, it was resolved to inquire into the affair of the Kaffers upon the spot where they had posted themselves in the greatest numbers; and, should it be found necessary, to proceed from thence to the residence of their king; at the same time to pass through and examine as many parts of the country, under the jurisdiction of Graaff Reynet, as could be done without too great an expenditure of time; and particularly to visit the bay that was said to be formed where the *Zwart-kops* river falls into the sea.

In the meantime I had an opportunity of looking round me and taking a cursory view of that division of Graaff Reynet, properly so called. It occupies about ten miles on every side of the village. On the north and east it is terminated by the *Snewberg* or Snowy mountains, and on the south and west is inclosed by the division of Camdeboo. It contains only twenty-six families, twelve of whom inhabit the

village: the rest are scattered over a wild barren country almost destitute of tree or shrub, and very little better than the Karroo desert. The Sunday river, in its passage from the Snowy mountains, winds round the small plain on which the Drosdy is placed, and furnishes it with a copious supply of water, without which it would produce nothing. The whole extent of this plain is not more than two square miles, and it is surrounded by mountains two thousand feet in height, from whose steep sides project, like so many lines of masonry, a great number of sand-stone strata; so that the heat of summer, increased by the confined situation and the reflection of the sun's rays from the rocky sides of these mountains, is intensely great: whilst the cold of winter, from their great height, and the proximity of the Snowy mountains, from whence the northerly winds rush with great violence through the kloof that admits the Sunday river, is almost intolerable; not merely on account of the decreased temperature, but from the total impossibility of stirring abroad during the continuance of these winds, which in whirling eddies carry round the plain a constant cloud of red earth and sand.

The village of Graaff Reynet is in latitude 32° 11′ south, longitude 26° east, and the distance from Cape Town about 500 miles. It consists of an assemblage of mud huts placed at some distance from each other, in two lines, forming a kind of street. At the upper end stands the house of the landrost, built also of mud, and a few miserable hovels that were intended as offices for the transaction of public business: most of these have tumbled in; and the rest are in a ruinous condition and not habitable. The jail is composed of mud walls and roofed with thatch; and so little tenable, that an

English deserter, who had been shut up in it for amusing the country people with an account of a conversation he had held with some French officer, made his escape the first night through the thatch. The mud walls of all the buildings are excavated, and the floors undermined by a species of *termes* or white ant, which destroys every thing that falls in its way except wood; and the bats that lodge in the thatch come forth at nights in such numbers as to extinguish the candles, and make it almost impossible to remain in a room where there is a light.

The village is chiefly inhabited by mechanics, and such as hold some petty employment under the landrost. Its appearance is more miserable than that of the poorest village in England. The necessaries of life are with difficulty procured in it; for, though there be plenty of land, few are found industrious enough to cultivate it. No milk, no butter, no cheese, no vegetables of any kind, are to be had upon any terms. There is no butcher, no chandler, no grocer, no baker. Every one must provide for himself as well as he can. They have neither wine nor beer; and the chief beverage of the inhabitants is the water of the Sunday river, which, in the summer season, is strongly impregnated with salt. It would be difficult to say what the motives could have been that induced the choice of this place for the residence of the landrost. It could not proceed from any personal comfort or convenience that the place held out: perhaps those of the inhabitants have chiefly been consulted, as the situation is nearly central; though it is more probable that some interested motive, or a want of judgment, or a contradictory spirit, must have operated in assigning so wild, so secluded, and so unprofitable a place for the seat of the Drosdy.

On the eleventh of August we set out from Graaff Reynet on our projected expedition, accompanied by two hemraaden whom the landrost thought it adviseable to take, having proposed to call a meeting of the inhabitants of the distant divisions of his district as he passed through them, to read his commission, administer the oath of allegiance, and to proclaim those parts of his public instructions as might particularly relate to such inhabitants. He thought by doing this to spare them the trouble and expense of a long journey to the Drosdy.

Our first route lay directly to the southward towards the sea-coast, through a country as sandy, arid, and sterile as any part of the Great desert, and equally ill supplied with water. Two farm-houses only were passed on the first day's journey, which was in the division called Camdeboo, a Hottentot word, signifying *green elevations*, applying to the projecting buttresses which support the Snowy mountains, and which are mostly covered with verdure. The farmers here are entirely graziers; and for feeding their numerous herds each occupies a vast extent of country. Notwithstanding the miserable appearance of the plains, the bullocks were large and in excellent condition, and the sheep were in tolerable good order; but the broad-tailed breed of the Cape seems to be of a very inferior kind to those of Siberia and oriental Tartary: they are long-legged, small in the body, remarkably thin in the fore quarters and across the ribs: they have very little intestine or net fat; the whole of this seems to be collected upon the hind part of the thigh and upon the tail: this is short, broad, flat, naked on the under side, and weighs in general about five or six pounds: sometimes it exceeds a dozen pounds in weight: when melted it retains the consistence of fat vegetable oils,

and in this state it is frequently used as a substitute for butter, and for making soap by boiling it with the lye of the ashes of the salsola. The sheep of the Cape are marked with every shade of colour; some are black, some brown, and others bay; but the greatest number are spotted: their necks are small and extended, and their ears long and pendulous: they weigh from sixty to seventy pounds each when taken from their pasture; but on their arrival at the Cape are reduced to about forty; and they are sold to the butchers who collect them upon the spot for six or eight shillings a-piece. The price of a bullock is about twelve rixdollars, or forty-eight shillings, and the average weight is about four hundred pounds. The graziers seldom kill an ox for their own consumption, unless it be to lay up in salt. Their general fare is mutton and goats' flesh. The African goat is the finest of the species I ever saw, and so wonderfully prolific that it is considered as the most profitable animal, for home consumption, that can be kept. They go twenty weeks with young, and seldom have less than two at a birth, very commonly three, and frequently four. The flesh, though much inferior to mutton, is thought quite good enough for the Hottentots in the service of the farmer: and the choice pieces, well soaked in the fat of sheep's tails, are served upon his own table.

The wool of the sheep is little better than a strong frizzled hair, of which they make no kind of use except for stuffing cushions or mattresses. They neither wash nor shear their sheep, but suffer the wool to drop off on its own accord, which it usually does in the months of September and October. The skins are used only as clothing for the Hottentots, aprons for their children, bags for holding various articles, and other household purposes.

A hog is a species of animal scarcely known in the district. No reason but that of indolence can be assigned for the want of it. To feed hogs there would be a necessity of planting, and to this they seem to have a mortal antipathy. It is great exertion to throw a little corn into the ground for their own bread. Many are not at the trouble even of doing this, but prefer to make a journey of several days to exchange their cattle for what corn they may stand in need of. Potatoes they have a dislike to; and, according to their report, the Hottentots, whose stomachs are not very nice, refuse to eat them. It is curious enough that this poisonous root has been generally rejected at first by most nations. Strong prejudices existed against it when first it was introduced into England, where the privation of it now would be one of the greatest calamities that could befal the country. The same reasons that prevent them from breeding hogs, operate against their keeping poultry: these would require grain, and this labour. Of wild fowl, such as ducks and geese, may be procured in most parts of the country almost any quantity, at the expense of a little powder and shot. The larger kinds of game, however, are generally the objects of the Dutch farmers—They have a sufficient degree of penetration to calculate, that the same quantity of powder required to kill a duck, will bring down an antelope. Of this deer, that species mentioned in a former Chapter under the name of the spring-bok, is met with on the plains of Camdeboo in numbers that are almost incredible. A thorough-bred sportsman will kill from twenty to thirty every time he goes out. This, however, the farmer does by a kind of poaching. He lies concealed among the thickets near the springs or pools of water, to which the whole herd, towards the close of the day, repair to quench their

thirst, and by firing among them his enormous piece loaded with several bullets, he brings down three or four at a shot. Ostriches we saw in great plenty, and often refreshed our whole company with the spoils of their nests.

On the twelfth, in the course of twenty miles, we saw two farm-houses, one of which was deserted from a scarcity of water; and the following day we also passed two houses. Having crossed the Sunday river nine times since our departure from Graaff Reynet, and every time in great danger of overturning the waggons, we now quitted it altogether, and encamped on the arid plain at a distance from any water. This part of the district is called the *Zwart Ruggens*, or black ridges. Except the plain of our encampment, there scarcely occurred, in the distance of forty miles, a hundred yards of level ground. The roads over the ridges were execrably bad, constantly ascending or descending, covered with large fragments of loose stones, or carried over ledges of firm rock.

Though vegetation in general was thinly scattered over the stony surface, and languid, some of the eminences were tolerably well clothed with a species of euphorbium, whose luxuriance of growth showed it to be congenial to the soil and the situation. The leaves were erect, hexangular, and armed with a row of double spines along each edge. It appeared to be the same species of which Mr. Patterson has given a drawing; but it is not here considered as a poisonous plant, as he has represented it, though a very obnoxious one, as it prevents the cattle from picking up any little herbage that may be growing about its roots. Another species of euphorbium, scarcely rising above the surface of the ground, is

here very common. From a central *corona* issue, as so many radii, a number of round imbricated leaves, containing, like all the rest of this genus, a white milky fluid: the central part of one of these plants incloses not less than a pint. The oxen pierce the corona with their incisive teeth, and drink the milk; and it is the opinion of the farmers, that they become fat upon it. Though less astringent than the fluid that is usually produced by this tribe of plants, it possesses that quality to a very considerable degree; yet no sort of inconvenience is known to attend the use of it to the cattle. The peasantry collect it for another purpose. When warmed over the fire, and stirred round with a soft ochraceous stone, it takes the consistence of tar, and in that state is considered as an excellent grease for the axes of their waggon wheels.

We passed, on the fourteenth, a narrow opening, called the Poort, through a long range of hills running east and west, and extending each way beyond the limitation of sight. The approach to the chasm was one of the most beautiful things imaginable. For the space of three or four miles, on the northern side, the road serpentized through a tall shrubbery, diversified with the choicest plants of Southern Africa. Among these were now in the height of their blossoms a great variety of the *crassula*, a beautiful scarlet *cotelydon*, many species of the *aloe*, some throwing out their clusters of flowers across the road, and others rising above the rest in spikes of blood-red blossoms not less than fifteen feet in height, African *briony* clasping every bush with its vine-like leaves, and a beautiful plant resembling the jessamine, whose clusters of white flowers scented the whole country. The road through the shrubbery was composed of a smooth, yellowish, sandy

earth without a stone, and had in no part the length of a hundred yards in a straight line. The *Riet berg*, or Reed mountain, in the back ground, blushed to the very summit with a wood of tall smooth-stemmed aloes, bearing spikes of pink coloured flowers.

Having passed the kloof, or poort, we crossed a plain of six or seven miles in width, and encamped on the *Wolga fonteyn*, at the feet of another range of hills parallel to the Riet berg, and more thickly covered with frutescent plants. Here we started a herd of fourteen buffaloes that had been rolling in the spring. They were very shy, and scampered away at a great rate into the thicket that covered the sides of the hills. For three days journey from this place the road lay over a surface of country finely marked with bold hills, plains, gradual swells, and hollows; but the whole was entirely covered with a forest of shrubbery. Sometimes for the distance of ten or twelve miles there was not the least opening that made it possible to turn a yard out of the path either to the right or to the left; and from the heights, where the bushes were less tall, the eye could discern only an uninterrupted forest. Nothing could be more beautiful nor more interesting than this grand and extensive shrubbery appeared to be for the greatest part of the first day's journey; but the inconvenience it occasioned towards the evening, when we wished to halt, was seriously felt. There was no space sufficient for the tent and waggons, or to make fast the oxen; and, what was the worst of all, not a drop of water. The weather had been very sultry, the thermometer fluctuating generally from 75° to 80° in the shade during the day; yet the cattle had tasted water once only in three days. The two nights they were unyoked it was

necessary to bind them fast to the waggons, that they might not stray into the thicket, where they would infallibly have been lost, or devoured by lions. The prints of the feet of this destructive animal were every where fresh on the road, and every night we heard them roaring around us. Besides these were heard the cries of a multitude of ferocious beasts that nightly prowl the woods in quest of prey. The roaring of lions, the bellowing of buffaloes, the howling of wolves, the yelping of jackals, and the timid looing of our oxen, were parts in the nocturnal concert that could not be said to produce much harmony to us, who were encamped in the midst of a forest of which we could discern no end.

On the slope of a hill, towards the southern verge of the forest, I distinguished among the clumps of frutescent plants several flowers of a *strelitzia*, which I took for granted to be the *reginæ*, but on a nearer approach it turned out to be a new species differing remarkably in the foliage from the two already known. Instead of the broad plantain-like leaves of these, those of the new species were round, a little compressed, half an inch in diameter at the base, tapering to a point at the top, and from six to ten feet high: the flowers appeared to be the same as those of the *reginæ*, the colours perhaps a little deeper, particularly that of the nectarium, which was of a beautiful violet blue. I procured half a dozen roots, which are now growing, and likely to do well, in the botanic garden at the Cape. A beautiful plant of the palm tribe was growing near the strelitzia, from the pith of which the Hottentots were said to make a kind of bread. It was a species of *zamia*, apparently a variety of the *cycadis* described by Mr. Masson. The leaves were of a

glaucous colour and lanceolate; the leaflets nearest the base pointed with one, those about the middle with two, and those at the extremities with three, strong spines.

On the evening of the seventeenth we encamped on the verdant bank of a beautiful lake, in the midst of a wood of frutescent plants. It was of an oval form, about three miles in circumference. On the western side was a shelving bank of green turf, and round the other parts of the bason the ground, rising more abruptly, and to a greater height, was covered thickly with the same kind of arboreous and succulent plants as had been observed to grow most commonly in the thickets of the adjoining country. The water was perfectly clear, but salt as brine. It was one of those salt-water lakes which abound in Southern Africa, where they are called *zout pans* by the colonists. This it seems is the most famous in the country, and is resorted to by the inhabitants from very distant parts of the colony, for the purpose of procuring salt for their own consumption or for sale. It is situated on a plain of considerable elevation above the level of the sea. The greatest part of the bottom of the lake was covered with one continued body of salt like a sheet of ice, the crystals of which were so united that it formed a solid mass as hard as rock. The margin or shore of the bason was like the sandy beach of the sea coast, with sandstone and quartz pebbles thinly scattered over it, some red, some purple, and others grey. Beyond the narrow belt of sand the sheet of salt commenced with a thin porous crust, increasing in thickness and solidity as it advanced towards the middle of the lake. The salt that is taken out for use is generally broken up with picks where it is about four or five inches thick, which is at no great

distance from the margin of the lake. The thickness in the middle is not known, a quantity of water generally remaining in that part. The dry south-easterly winds of summer agitating the water of the lake, produce on the margin a fine, light, powdery salt, like flakes of snow. This is equally beautiful as the refined salt of England, and is much sought after by the women, who always commission their husbands to bring home a quantity of snowy salt for the table.

In endeavouring to account for the great accumulation of pure crystallized salt at the bottom of this lake, I should have conceived the following explanation sufficiently satisfactory, had not some local circumstances seemed to militate strongly against it. The water of the sea on the coast of Africa contains a very high proportion of salt. During the strong south-east winds of summer, the spray of the sea is carried to a very considerable extent into the country in the shape of a thick mist. The powerful and combined effects of the dry wind and the sun carry on a rapid evaporation of the aqueous part of the mist, and of course a disengagement of the saline particles: these in their fall, are received on the ground or on the foliage of the shrubbery. When the rains commence they are again taken up in solution and carried into the salt pan, towards which the country on every side inclines. The quantity of salt thus separated from the sea, and borne upon the land, is much more considerable than at first thought it might seem to be. At the distance of several miles from the sea-coast, the air, in walking against the wind, is perceptibly saline to the lips. It leaves a damp feel upon the clothes, and gives to them also a saline taste. The ostrich feather I wore in my hat, al-

ways hung in separate threads when near the sea-coast in a south-east wind, and recovered itself immediately when the wind shifted. In short, the air becomes so much obscured with the saline particles, that objects can only be distinguished through it at very short distances. These winds prevailing for seven or eight months in the year, the mind can easily conceive that, in the lapse of ages, the quantity of salt carried upon the surrounding country, and wafted annually from thence into the common reservoir, might have accumulated to the present bulk.

Were this, however, actually the case, it would naturally follow, that all the reservoirs of water in the proximity of this sea-coast should contain, more or less, a portion of salt. Most of them in fact do so. Between the one in question and the sea, a distance of six miles, there are three other salt lakes, two of which are on a plain within a mile of the strand. None of these, however, deposit a body of salt except in very dry summers, when the greatest part of the water is evaporated. One is called the Red Salt pan, the crystals of salt produced in it being always tinged of a ruby colour with iron. This lake is about twice the size of that above described. All these should seem to favour the supposition of the salt being brought from the sea, were it not that close to the side of the lake that produces the greatest quantity, is a stagnant pool or *valley*, the water of which is perfectly fresh. Another strong argument against the hypothesis above assumed, is the circumstance of our having discovered, on a future journey, several salt pans of the same kind behind the Snowy mountains, at the distance of two hundred miles fron the sea-coast, and on an elevation that could not be less than five or six thousand

feet. The soil too on all sides of the Zwart Kop's salt pan was deep vegetable earth, in some places red and in others black, resting upon a bed of clay, and without having the smallest vestige of salt in its composition. That salt in a soil was inimical to, and destructive of, vegetation, was well known to the ancients. In the metaphorical manner of the eastern nations in treating things as well as ideas, it was usually ordained, after the destruction of a city, to "throw salt upon it, that nothing afterwards might "grow there." The shrubbery, however, upon the banks of this salt lake was beautifully luxuriant to the very water's edge.

A cause, then, less remote, remains to be adopted. Either salt-water springs must exist towards the centre of the lake, or the water that rests in it must come in contact with a stratum of sal gem or rock salt. This in fact seems to be the only satisfactory way of accounting for the saltness of the sea; and if the subterranean strata of this substance be among the number of those that are most commonly met with in the bowels of the earth, as has been supposed, the effects that exist may easily be conceived to arise from it. The salt of Poland alone would be more than sufficient to salify the Northern Atlantic.

We happened to visit the lake at a very unfavourable season, when it was full of water. About the middle it was three feet deep, but sufficiently clear to perceive several veins of a dark ferruginous colour, intersecting in various directions the sheet of salt. These were, in all probability, springs whose action had impeded crystallization, and brought up a quantity of ochraceous matter. I caused a hole four feet in depth to be dug in the sand close to the edge of the water. The two first feet were through sand

like that of the sea-shore, in which were mingled small shining crystals of salt. The third foot was considerably harder and more compact, and came up in flakes that required some force to break, and the last foot was so solid that the spade would scarcely pierce it; and one fifth part of the mass at least was pure salt in crystals. The water now gushed in perfectly clear, and as salt as brine.

Another object of natural history was discovered about five miles north-west from the salt pan. This was on the side of a small hill, down which ran a streamlet of chalybeate water from a spring situated about midway of the ascent. Immediately below the spring the stream ran through a chasm of five or six feet deep, in the midst of a mound of black boggy earth, which seemed to have been vomited out of the spring. The mound was completely destitute of any kind of vegetation, and so light and tumefied that it would scarcely support the weight of a man. The water was clear, but the bottom of the channel was covered with a deep orange-coloured sediment of a gelatinous consistence, void of smell or taste. In every part of the bog was oozing out a substance, in some places yellow, and in others green, which was austere to the taste like that of alum. When exposed to the flame of a candle, it swelled out into a large hollow blister, of which the external part had become a red friable clay, and the interior surface was coated over with a black glassy pellicle. The smell given out was at first slightly sulphureous and afterwards bituminous. Great quantities of a dark, red, ocraceous earth, were thrown out from the bog in small heaps like mole-hills. This, when taken between the fingers, became oily and adhesive, and the colour brightened to that of vermilion. Both the red, the green, and

the yellow substances, when boiled in water, deposited a smooth clayey sediment unctuous to the feel, tasteless and colourless. The water had imbibed a strong acid, and had dissolved part of the copper kettle in which it was boiled, as appeared by this metal being brought down on pieces of polished iron. The impregnated water changed the colour of blue paper. The want of chemical tests prevented any farther experiments; but I imagine the substances were sulphuric acid in combination with clay forming alum, and the same acid in union with iron, composing green vitriol or copperas, which the mixture of bituminous or other heterogeneous matter had prevented from forming itself into regular crystals.

The water of the spring was of the same temperature as the surrounding atmosphere; but a farmer who was with us asserted positively that fifteen years ago, when last he was on the spot, the water was thrown out warm to a considerable degree. His assertion, however, was liable to some doubt. Periodical hot springs are phenomena in nature not frequently, if ever, met with. It is possible that a portion of unsaturated sulphuric acid coming in its disengaged state in contact with the water might occasionally raise its temperature. The information of the peasantry on any subject, and in all countries, should be received with a degree of caution. Those of Africa, I have generally observed, are much disposed to the marvellous. Before I ascended the hill in question, I was told that the suffocating smell of sulphur constantly given out was scarcely to be supported, and that there was always a prodigious smoke, both of which were palpable falsehoods.

We found encamped on the borders of the salt-water lake a farmer and his whole family, consisting of sons and daughters, and grandchildren; of oxen, cows, sheep, goats, and dogs. He was moving to a new habitation; and, in addition to his live-stock, carried with him his whole property in two waggons. He advised us to make fast our oxen to the waggons, as two of his horses had been devoured on the preceding night by lions. This powerful and treacherous animal is very common in the thickets about the salt pan; treacherous, because it seldom makes an open attack, but, like the rest of the feline genus, lies in ambush till it can conveniently spring upon its prey. Happy for the peasantry, the Hottentots, and those animals that are the objects of its destruction, were its noble and generous nature, that so oft has fired the imagination of poets, realized, and that his royal paw disdained to stain itself in the blood of any sleeping creature. The lion, in fact, is one of the most indolent of all the beasts of prey, and never gives himself the trouble of a pursuit unless hard pressed with hunger. On our arrival at a farm-house on the banks of the Zwart-kop's river, a lion had just been shot by a trap-gun; and shortly after one of the Hottentots had brought down a large male buffalo. This animal (the *bos caffer* of the *Systema Naturæ)* is the strongest and the fiercest of the bovine genus. Nature seems to have designed him as a model for producing extraordinary powers. The horns at the base are each twelve or thirteen inches broad, and are separated only by a narrow channel, which fills up with age, and gives to the animal a forehead completely covered with a rugged mass of horn as hard as rock. From the base they diverge backwards, and are incurved towards the points, which are generally distant from each

other about three feet. About the height of a common-sized ox, the African buffalo is at least twice its bulk. The fibres of its muscles are like so many bundles of cords, and they are covered with a hide little inferior in strength and thickness to that of the rhinosceros. It is preferred by the peasantry to the skin of all other animals for cutting into thongs to be used as traces and harness for their carts and waggons. The flesh is too coarse-grained to be good; yet the farmers generally salt it up as food for their Hottentots. It is curious enough that the teeth of this species of buffalo should at all times be so perfectly loose in the sockets as to rattle and shake in its head.

The lion frequently measures his strength with the buffalo, and always gains the advantage. This, however, he is said to accomplish by stratagem, being afraid to attack him on the open plain. He lies waiting in ambush till a convenient opportunity offers for springing upon the buffalo, and fixing his fangs in his throat; then striking his paw into the animal's face, he twists round the head and pins him to the ground by the horns, holding him in that situation till he expires from loss of blood. Such a battle would furnish a grand subject for the powers of a masterly pencil.

If the Dutch have been too indolent to domesticate the qua-cha and the zebra, it is less a matter of astonishment that no attempts have been made on the fierce and powerful buffalo. Any other nation, possessing the Cape for one hundred and fifty years, would certainly have effected it. A male, if taken very young, and suffered to run among the cattle, would in all probability have intercourse with the cows; at least the other species of the bovine tribe, when

domesticated, have been found to mix together without any difficulty. Such a connection would produce a change in the present breed of cattle in the colony, and without doubt for the better: a worse it could not well be than the present long-legged ox of the country.

On the evening of the eighteenth we arrived at *Zwart-kop's*, or *Algoa bay*, and found his Majesty's brig, the Hope, riding at anchor there. This bay is open to every point of the compass from north-east to south-east, and of course affords no kind of shelter against the prevailing winds. The bottom, however, is generally fine sand and good holding-ground. Ships may anchor in five fathoms at the distance of a mile from the general landing-place, which is on the west side of the bay; but vessels of great burden should keep farther out on account of very heavy swell that almost perpetually rolls in from the eastward. The latitude of the landing-place is 33° 56′ south, and longitude 26° 53′ east of Greenwich; and the distance from the Cape, in a direct line, 500 English miles. The time of high-water, at full and change of the moon, appears to be about three o'clock, and the tide rises between six and seven feet. The extent of the bay, from the western point to the eastern extremity, where it rounds off into the general pending of the coast, is about twenty miles; and the shore, except from the landing-place to the west point, is a fine, smooth, sandy beach. The rivers that fall into the bay are the *Zwart-kop's*, the *Kooka*, and the *Sunday*. The mouth of each of these rivers is closed up by a bar of sand, which occasionally breaks down as the mass of water in the river becomes too heavy for the mound of sand to support it; and the first south-east wind again blocks it up, carrying at the same time a quantity

of salt water into the river. Close to the landing-place, however, there is a copious spring of excellent water at the extremity of a narrow slip of ground, hemmed in between a ridge of sand-hills on one side, and by a sudden rise of the country on the other. This slip is about four thousand feet long by five hundred in width. It is composed of excellent soil, has a gentle slope to the shore of the bay, and is the prettiest situation for a small fishing village that could possibly be imagined.

Zwart-kop's bay, indeed, seems to hold out very considerable advantages in the fishing trade. The bay swarms with the black whale, and abounds with every sort of excellent fish that frequent the coast of Southern Africa; and the salt pan would furnish an inconsumable quantity of strong bay salt ready prepared for use. More solid advantages might still be derived to the trading part of the nation, and to the East-India Company in particular, were an establishment formed at this place for the preparation of salted beef and fish. The bad quality of the Cape beef has been accounted for in the preceding chapter. The cattle in this part of the country, from the Snowy mountains to the sea-coast, are generally in good condition; and the beef that is killed here, takes salt and keeps just as well as in Europe. If the butchers at the Cape can afford to contract for supplying the army with beef at two-pence a-pound, after having brought the cattle five, six, and seven hundred miles at their own expense, and at the loss of almost half the weight of the animals, it may easily be conceived at how very cheap a rate vessels bound on long voyages might be victualled at Zwart-kop's bay: or, if the meat here prepared should be transported to the Cape in coasting vessels, it might be afforded there considerably under six-pence a-

pound. The surrounding country is very fertile; and corn in almost any quantity might be purchased at the bay for less than three shillings a bushel.—Hides and skins might also be salted and become an article of export. Those of the wild antelopes, even with the rough dressing of the uninformed peasantry, make very fine leather. For strength and durability, the skins of wild animals are much preferable to those that have been domesticated.

At the distance of fifteen miles to the westward of the bay, and close to the sea-shore, many thousand acres of ground are covered completely with forest-trees of various kinds and dimensions: the most common was the *geel hout* or yellow wood *(taxus elongatus)* erroneously called by Thunberg the *ilex crocea*. These trees grow to the amazing size of ten feet in diameter, and to the height of thirty or forty feet of trunk, clear of branches. The wood is very serviceable for many purposes, but will not bear exposure to the weather. Next to the yellow wood is the *yzer hout*, iron-wood (a *sideroxylon)* growing to the size of three feet in diameter, and very high. The wood of this tree is close-grained, ponderous, and very hard. *Hassagai hout* (the *curtesia faginea* of the *Hortus Kewensis)* is a beautiful tree growing to the size of the iron-wood, and is used for naves, fellies, and spokes of waggon-wheels, and most implements of husbandry. The grain of this wood is somewhat closer, and the colour darker, than those of plain mahogany. *Stink hout*, or stinking wood, takes its name from an offensive excrementitious odour that exhales while green, and which it retains till perfectly seasoned. It grows almost to the size of the *geel hout*, and is by many degrees the best wood in the colony. The grain and shading are not unlike those of walnut; and

many specimens from old trees make exceeding beautiful furniture. It appears to be well calculated for use in ship-building, either as knees, timbers, or plank. The stink hout is the native oak of Africa, and I believe the only species found upon that continent. It may, therefore, not improperly be called the *Quercus Africana*. Several other timber-trees of vast size were growing here, and afterwards met with in various parts of the colony, particularly along the southern coast, to the number of more than forty different kinds, a list of which will be given in a future chapter; yet in Cape Town there is a general complaint of want of wood; and the extravagant demand of six hundred *per cent.* profit has been made there for European deals.

In addition to the forest-trees, were met with a great variety of small woods for poles; and the whole coast, for more than a day's journey to the westward of Zwart-kop's bay, was covered with thick brushwood almost down to the water's edge, The greatest part of the forests of Africa is encumbered with a species of *lichen* that covers nearly the whole foliage, and hangs from the branches in tufts of a foot to three feet in length. This lichen was observed particularly to be growing upon the *geel hout*, and evidently impeded the growth of its branches.

In the midst of all these forests, the miserable hovels in which the graziers live are the pictures of want and wretchedness. Four low mud-walls, with a couple of square holes to admit the light, and a door of wicker-work, a few crooked poles to support a thatch of rushes, slovenly spread over them, serves for the dwelling of many a peasant whose stock consists of several thousand sheep and as many

hundred heads of cattle. The oxen in this particular pasture are not so large nor so fat as those farther up in the country, nor were the sheep nearly so good as those of Camdeboo. One principal article of their revenue is butter. An African cow, either from its being a degenerated breed, or from the nature of its food, or the effects of the climate, or perhaps from a combination of these, gives a very small quantity of poor milk. Four quarts a-day is considered as something extraordinary, and about half the quantity is the usual average of a cow at the very top of her milk. The butter is sometimes very good; but the manner of plunging the whole milk into the churn without suffering it to stand and cast the cream, is generally against its being so; nor is the least cleanliness observed in the management of the dairy.

The country about Zwart-kop's bay seems best adapted for the cultivation of grain. The farmers give themselves at this place no trouble to manure the land, yet reckon upon a return of twenty-five, thirty, and even forty, for one, especially if a stream of water can occasionally be turned upon the ground. In stiff clayey ground a small quantity of sheep's dung is sometimes employed to prevent the fragments from clodding together, and to make their parts less tenacious. How little they esteem manure is very evident from the heaps of dung piled up about the houses in those places where the cattle, in order to preserve them from beasts of prey, are pent up at nights. These are circular or square spaces, shut in by dead branches of the thorny mimosa, and are called *kraals*, a name which they have also thought proper to transfer to the collected huts of the Hottentots or Kaffers. The beds of some of these kraals were twelve feet deep of dung,

unmixed with any other material; and this is not the only nor the least offensive nuisance with which the hovel of a Dutch peasant is usually surrounded.

The great fertility of the land in this part of the colony, can be no inducement for the farmers to extend the cultivation of grain beyond the present limited quantity, as they can have no demand for their produce, unless a coasting trade should be established. They would be very glad to find a market for their grain at a contract price of two shillings and eight pence for a Winchester bushel, delivered at Zwart-kop's bay. The wheat of the Cape is a large full grain, weighing usually from sixty-one to sixty-five pounds a bushel. Since the capture of the Cape, a small cargo was sent to Europe, which sold in Mark-lane market at a higher price than the best English wheat that appeared on the same day.

The valley through which the Zwart-kop's river meanders in its course to the bay, is a fertile tract of country, the greatest part of it capable of being laid under water. It is twenty miles in length and between two and three in width. The hills, that on each side rise with an easy slope, exhibit an unbroken forest of evergreen plants, holding a middle rank, in point of size, between shrubs and trees. The tree *crassula*, several species of the *aloe*, the *euphorbia*, and other succulent plants, were also mixed with the shrubbery. The whole valley is divided between four families, each having not less than five thousand acres of land, independent of the inclosing hills covered with wood. Yet not satisfied with this enormous quantity, they have made several attempts to burn down the forest, that the cattle might more conveniently come at the hefts

of sweet grass that abound within it. Hitherto all their endeavours have proved fruitless. The moment that the succulent plants, particularly the great *aloes* and *euphorbia*, became heated, the expanded air within them burst open the stems, and their juices, rushing out in streams, extinguished the fire.

In one part of the valley was a morass of considerable extent, that by one single drain might be converted into a very beautiful meadow. The vast numbers of the Egyptian and the Mountain goose, of teals, and several species of ducks, that harboured in the reeds, by which the swamp was covered, were beyond credibility, and the damage they did to the corn was very considerable. I have seen a field literally covered with them; and they were too bold to be driven away by shooting at them. The buffaloes also descend from the thickets at night, and commit great depredations among the corn. These, however, are much more easily chased away than the geese, and retire at the report of a musket.

The swamp concealed also a species of antelope, or goat, called the *riet-bok*, or red goat, which does not appear yet to have been described by naturalists. In colour and size the male approaches nearly to the *leucophæa*, or blue antelope. Its horns are from nine inches to a foot in length, diverge a little towards the points, which are bent forwards, and are annulated about one-fourth of the length from the base. A crest of short hair runs from the throat to the chest, which circumstance may probably assign it a place in the goat genus. The distinction seems to be arbitrary, and not drawn by nature. This is a very rare animal, and scarcely known in most parts of the colony. Another species of antelope was here very plentiful, known by the Hot-

tentot name of *orabie*, which, except in colour and size, being of a darker brown and a little larger, bore a considerable resemblance to the steenbok: it was marked down the face with two yellow lines. Here also we met with that beautiful little animal the *royal antelope* of Pennant, and the *pygmæa* of the *Systema Naturæ*. Except the pigmy musk-deer, the royal antelope is the smallest of the hoofed quadrupeds: the height is from nine to twelve inches: the sides of a light brown, passing into an ash-coloured blue on the back: the horns are about an inch and half long, erect and parallel, black, polished, and shining like marble: its habits are mild and innocent. The *boschbok*, or wood-deer, the *antelope sylvatica*, with its white-spotted haunches, was common amongst the brushwood; and the griesbok, the steenbok, and the duiker, were very plentiful upon the plains.

Of birds, besides the ducks and geese already noticed, were great variety of water-fowl, such as flamingos, pelicans, and several species of cranes. Partridges, pheasants, and bustards were also very plentiful. The bird called in the Cape a pheasant, is in fact a *tetrao*, or grouse, with remarkably strong spurs on the legs, and two spurious ones just below the knee-joint. Besides the two species of bustards known in the colony by the name of *korhaans*, at this place was a third, which appeared to be by much the finest bird in Southern Africa, and which, though sufficiently common, has not yet been described in the *Systema Naturæ*. It is called here the *wilde pauw*, or wild peacock, a name common with another large and elegant bird, the *ardea pavonina*, or balearic crane. The bird in question is an *otis*, and is nearly as large as the Norfolk bustard. The feathers of the neck are long, very thick, and loose, like

those of a domestic fowl, of a bright chesnut-colour on the upper part, and an ash-coloured blue under the throat and on the breast. The feathers of the back beautifully undulated with black and brown lines, the belly white; the tail-feathers from sixteen to twenty in number, marked across with alternate bars of black and white; the spread of the wings seven feet, and the whole length of the bird three feet and an half. It is generally met with in the neigbourhood of farm-houses; and to all appearance might very easily be domesticated: the flesh is exceeding good with a high flavour of game. In the vicinity of the woods we saw a great number of the *falco serpentarius*, ridiculously enough called the secretary bird, from the long feathers of its crest being supposed to resemble the pens that it was the custom for merchants' clerks to stick in the hair. The serpentarius is the avowed enemy of snakes, on which account he is considered, both by the Colonists and the Hottentots, as a sacred bird. Of the several kinds of snakes that they here enumerate, one only was considered as innoxious; this was the *boom slange*, or tree-snake, so called from its being generally found coiled round the branches of trees; it is from six to ten feet in length, very thick, and of a dark steel-blue colour approaching nearly to black. It is said to take its abode in trees for the sake of procuring its food with the greater convenience, which in general consists of the smaller kinds of birds. The fascinating power ascribed to certain snakes, of drawing animals within their reach by fixing their eyes upon them, or by some other means, has often been remarked and as often disbelieved. When a fact is mentioned of so extraordinary a nature, that the generality of mankind could not have observed it, individual testimony is not always of sufficient force to establish general belief. In the

southern part of Africa, where snakes are every where met with in great abundance, the fact with regard to their fascinating power over birds is so well known, that very few of the peasantry will hesitate to vouch for the truth of it from personal observation; but I have never heard it supposed here, that the influence of the charm was extended to the human species, as has been asserted, seemingly on good authorities, to be the case in parts of Asia and North America. The most formidable species of this venomous tribe of animals in the colony of the Cape, is the hooded snake, which they call the cobra capella. The Hottentots are acquainted with several vegetable antidotes against the poison of serpents; but the most approved remedy among the Dutch is the *slange steen*, or snake-stone, which they hold to be infallible. This is nothing more than a piece of firm bone of some animal made into an oval shape and burnt round the edges so as to leave a whitish spot in the middle. The country-people, who purchase this remedy under the idea of its being a stone taken out of the head of a certain species of serpent, were very much astonished on being told that it was only a piece of bone; and the more so on finding that this substance stood their test of the goodness of the *slange steen*, which was that of throwing out bubbles on the surface when immersed in water. To the porosity of the bone may be ascribed its healing qualities, if it actually possesses any; for which reason any other substance made up of capillary tubes, as common sponge for instance, might produce the same effect.

About twenty miles to the westward of Zwartkop's bay, commences another wide, open, unsheltered indent in the coast, called Camtoos bay, into which fall the Krommé river, the Camtoos river,

Van Staaden's river, and several other inferior streams. At the mouth of the Krommé river two or three ships may ride at anchor in tolerable good shelter from most winds except the south-east. The country that surrounds this large bay is covered with thick brushwood, and in places with clumps of forest-trees. Near the mouth of Van Staaden's river we found, in the steep sides of a deep glen, several specimens of a lead ore. It was of that species known by the name of galena, which is lead mineralized with sulphur. The masses had no appearance of cubic crystallization, but were granular and amorphous in some specimens, and the surfaces in others were made up of small facets. This sort of galena is sometimes called by miners *white silver ore*, on account of the large proportion it has been found to contain of that metal. It is well known that all galenas contain more or less of silver; and it has been observed, that those whose configuration is least distinct, have the greatest proportion, the heterogeneous metal having disturbed and obstructed the natural arrangement of the particles, which would be that of a mathematical cube if perfectly pure. The vein of the ore was about three inches wide and an inch thick, and it appeared to increase both in width and thickness as it advanced under the stratum of rock with which it was covered. The *gangue* or *matrix* was quartoze sand-stone of a yellowish tinge, cellular and fibrous, harsh to the feel, and easily broken.

Some experiments were formerly made, in a rough way, at the Cape of Good Hope, upon specimens of this identical vein of lead-ore, by Major Van Dhen, an officer in the Dutch service, and the result of these proved it to be uncommonly rich in silver. According to this gentleman's statement of

the assay, two hundred pounds of the ore contained one hundred pounds of pure lead, and eight ounces of silver. Should this on a more accurate trial turn out to be the case, it may hereafter prove a valuable acquisition to the colony. Lead mines, it is true, are generally very deep below the surface of the ground, and the working of them is both troublesome and expensive. But at this place a vein of rich ore, showing itself at the surface, gives reasonable grounds for presuming that the large body of the mine is at no great depth, and if so, it might be worked with great advantage. The surrounding country is particularly favourable for the prosecution of such an undertaking. Wood is in such abundance both for building and for fuel, that it could not be exhausted in an age. Two streams of water unite in the bottom of the glen. The country would support with cattle and corn any number of people that might be required to carry on the works; and the distance of the mine is only five miles from the mouth of Van Staaden's river in Camtoos bay.

Having finished our observations on Zwart-kop's bay and the adjoining country, the next step was to make the best of our way to the eastward along the sea-coast, where the Kaffers were said to have stationed themselves in the greatest numbers. An old Hottentot, who on former occasions had served as interpreter between the landrosts of Graaff Reynet and the Kaffer Chiefs, had, according to appointment, joined us with his suite, consisting of about half a dozen of his countrymen. The landrost, on his joining us, invested him with his staff of office, a long stick with a brass head, on which was engraven the king's arms. By such a staff, in the time of the Dutch government, a Hottentot was constituted a captain; and, by the number they created

of these captains, the ruin of their hordes was much facilitated. But they are now no more; they and their hordes have entirely disappeared, and our old *Captain Haasbeck* commands in Graaff Reynet without a rival.

Twenty years ago, if we may credit the travellers of that day, the country beyond Camtoos river, which was then the eastern limit of the colony, abounded with kraals or villages of Hottentots, out of which the inhabitants came to meet them by hundreds in a groupe. Some of these villages might still have been expected to remain in this remote and not very populous part of the colony. Not one, however, was to be found. There is not in the whole extensive district of Graaff Reynet a single horde of independent Hottentots; and perhaps not a score of individuals who are not actually in the service of the Dutch. These weak people, the most helpless, and in their present condition, perhaps the most wretched, of the human race, duped out of their possessions, their country, and finally out of their liberty, have entailed upon their miserable offspring a state of existence to which that of slavery might bear the comparison of happiness. It is a condition, however, not likely to continue to a very remote posterity. The name of Hottentot will be forgotten, or remembered only as that of a deceased person of little note. Their numbers of late years have rapidly declined. It has generally been observed, that wherever Europeans have colonized, the less civilized natives have always dwindled away, and at length totally disappeared. Various causes have contributed to the depopulation of the Hottentots. The impolitic custom of hording together in families, and of not marrying out of their own kraals, has no doubt

tended to enervate this race of men, and reduced them to their present degenerated condition, which is that of a languid, listless, phlegmatic people, in whom the prolific powers of nature seem to be almost exhausted. To this may be added their extreme poverty, scantiness of food, and continual dejection of mind, arising from the cruel treatment they receive from an inhuman and unfeeling peasantry, who, having discovered themselves to be removed to too great a distance from the seat of their former government to be awed by its authority, have exercised, in the most wanton and barbarous manner, an absolute power over these poor wretches, reduced to the necessity of depending upon them for a morsel of bread. There is scarcely an instance of cruelty said to have been committed against the slaves in the West-India islands, that could not find a parallel from the Dutch farmers of the remote parts of the colony towards the Hottentots in their service. Beating and cutting them with thongs of the hide of the sea-cow or rhinosceros, is a gentle punishment, though these sort of whips which they call *shambos* are most horrid instruments, tough, pliant, and heavy almost as lead. Firing small shot into the legs and thighs of a Hottentot, is a punishment not unknown to some of the monsters who inhabit the neighbourhood of Camtoos river. Instant death is not unfrequently the consequence of punishing these poor wretches in a moment of rage. This is of little consequence to the farmer; for though they are to all intents and purposes his slaves, yet they are not transferable property. It is this circumstance which, in his mind, makes their lives less valuable and their treatment more inhuman.

In offences of too small moment to stir up the phlegm of a Dutch peasant, the coolness and tranquillity displayed at the punishment of his slave or Hottentot, is highly ridiculous, and at the same time indicative of a savage disposition to unfeeling cruelty lurking in his heart. He flogs them, not by any given number of lashes, but by time; and as they have no clocks nor substitutes for them capable of marking the smaller divisions of time, he has invented an excuse for the indulgence of one of his most favourite sensualities, by flogging them till he has smoked as many pipes of tobacco as he may judge the magnitude of the crime to deserve. The government of Malacca, according to the manuscript journal of an intelligent officer in the expedition against that settlement, has adopted the same custom of *flogging by pipes;* and the fiscal or chief magistrate, or some of his deputies, are the smokers on such occasions.

By a resolution of the old government, as unjust as it was inhuman, a peasant was allowed to claim as his property, till the age of five-and-twenty, all the children of the Hottentots in his service to whom he had given in their infancy a morsel of meat. At the expiration of this period the odds are ten to one that the slave is not emancipated. A Hottentot knows nothing of his age; "he takes no note of "time." And though the spirit that dictated this humane law expanded its beneficence in favour of the Hottentot, by directing the farmer to register the birth of such children as he may intend to make his slaves, yet it seldom happens, removed as many of them are to the distance of ten or twelve days' journey from the Drosdy, that the Hottentot has an opportunity of inquiring when his servitude will expire; and indeed it is a chance if he thinks upon

or even knows the existence of such a resource. Should he be fortunate enough to escape at the end of the period, the best part of his life has been spent in a profitless servitude, and he is turned adrift in the decline of life (for a Hottentot begins to grow old at thirty) without any earthly thing he can call his own, except the sheep's skin upon his back.

The condition of those who engage themselves from year to year, is little better than that of the other. If they have already families, they erect for them little straw-huts near the farm-house. Their children are encouraged to run about the house of the peasant, where they receive their morsel of food. This is deemed sufficient to establish their claim to the young Hottentots; and should the parents, at the end of the term for which they engaged, express a desire to quit the service, the farmer will suffer them to go, perhaps turn them away, and detain their children.

Those who are unmarried and free, are somewhat better in their situation than the others, though not much. The pitiful wages they agree for, are stopped upon every frivolous occasion. If an ox or a sheep be missing, the Hottentot must replace them; nor would he be suffered to quit his service till he has earned the value of them. An ox, or a couple of cows, or a dozen sheep, worth forty or fifty shillings, are the usual wages of a whole year; and it frequently happens, that a bill for tobacco or brandy is brought against them to the full amount.

In such a situation, and under such circumstances, it may easily be supposed, that the Hottentot has little inducement to engage in marriage. Those who do so, have seldom more than two or three

children; and many of the women are barren. This, however, is not the case when a Hottentot woman is connected with a white man. The fruit of such an alliance is not only in general numerous, but are beings of a very different nature from the Hottentot, men of six feet high and stout in proportion, and women well made, not ill-featured, smart, and active. These people, called *bastaards*, generally marry with each other, or with persons of colour, but seldom with Hottentots; so that it is probable this mixed breed in a short time will supplant that from which they are descended in the female line. The Hottentot girls in the service of the colonists, are in situations too dependent to dare to reject the proffered embraces of the young peasantry.

It has frequently been observed, that a savage who dances and sings, must be happy. With him these operations are the effects of pleasurable sensations floating in his mind: in a civilized state, they are arts acquired by study, and practised at appointed times, without having any reference to the passions. If dancing and singing were the tests by which the happiness of a Hottentot was to be tried, he would be found among the most miserable of all human beings; I mean those Hottentots living with the farmers of Graaff Reynet in a state of bondage. It is rare to observe the muscles of his face relaxed into a smile. A depressed melancholy and deep gloom constantly overspread his countenance. A Ghonaqua man and a young Hottentot girl from Sneuwberg, both of them in the service of one of the farmers who crossed the desert with us, were the only two I had hitherto met with who seemed to have any taste for music. They had different instruments; one was a kind of guittar with three strings stretched over a piece of hollow wood with a long handle; it

was called in their language *gabowie*. The other instrument was extremely simple: It consisted of a piece of sinew or intestine twisted into a small cord, and fastened to a hollow stick about three feet in length, at one end to a small peg, which, by turning, brings the string to the proper degree of tension, and at the other to a piece of quill fixed into the stick. The tones of this instrument are produced by applying the mouth to the quill, and are varied according as the vibratory motion is given to the quill and string by inspiration or expiration. It sounds like the faint murmurs of distant music, that "comes o'er the ear" without any distinct note being made out by that organ. This instrument was called the *gowra*.

Of the very few Hottentots in the district of Graaff Reynet, who, besides our interpreter, had preserved a sort of independence, and supported themselves, partly by the chase, and partly from the labours of their children who were in servitude, was a small party of four or five old men who paid us a visit near the woods of *Bruyntjes Hoogté*. These men carried the ancient weapons of their nation, bows, and quivers charged with poisoned arrows. The bow was a plain piece of wood from the *guerrie bosch*, apparently a species of rhus; and sometimes the Hassagai wood is used for the same purpose. The string, three feet long, was composed of the fibres of the dorsal muscles of the spring-bok twisted into a cord. The stem of an aloe furnished the quiver. The arrow consisted of a reed, in one extremity of which was inserted a piece of highly-polished solid bone from the leg of an ostrich, round, and about five inches in length; the intent of it seemed to be that of giving weight, strength, and easy entrance to this part of the ar-

row. To the end of the bone was affixed a small sharp piece of iron of the form of an equilateral triangle; and the same string of sinews that bound this tight to the bone, served also to contain the poison between the threads and over the surface, which was applied in the consistence of wax or varnish. The string tied in also at the same time a piece of sharp quill, pointed towards the opposite end of the arrow, which was not only meant to increase the difficulty of drawing it out, but also to rankle and tear the flesh, and to bring the poison more in contact with the blood. The whole length of the arrow was barely two feet. There are several plants in South Africa from which the Hottentots extract their poisons by macerating the leaves or branches, and inspissating the juices, either by boiling or by exposure to the heat of the sun; but the poison taken from the heads of snakes, mixed with the juices of certain bulbous-rooted plants, is what they mostly depend upon. This party of old men had killed a hartebeest with a poisoned arrow, by wounding it in the thigh. The animal had run about half an hour after receiving the wound before it fell. They immediately cut away the flesh round the wound, when it has been made with a poisoned arrow, and squeeze out the blood from the carcase, in which state they know from experience that the flesh taken into the stomach will do them no injury.

The ancient manners and primitive character of this extraordinary race of men are, no doubt, much changed since their connection with the colonists; and the nearer they are found to the capital and the parts most inhabited by Europeans, the less they retain of them. If at any time they composed societies governed by laws, swayed by customs, and observant of religious ceremonies, many of which,

as related among the fables of ancient voyagers, and revived by some modern travellers, were so absurd and extremely ridiculous as to create strong doubts of their existence, they have now so completely lost them, that no one trace remains behind. The name even that has been given to this people is a fabrication. *Hottentot* is a word that has no place nor meaning in their language; and they take to themselves the name under the idea of its being a Dutch word. When they were spread over the southern angle of Africa, each horde had its particular name; but that by which the whole nation was distinguished, and which at this moment they bear among themselves in every part of the country, is *Quaiquæ*. From living together in particular clans, and, in later times, from mixing with different people, the Hottentots of one district differ very considerably from those of another. The part of the country we now were in, being the last that was colonized, was inhabited most probably by such as had retained more of their original character than the others; and it is those to whom the following remarks are meant to apply.

Low as they are sunk in the scale of humanity, their character seems to have been very much traduced and misrepresented. It is true there is nothing prepossessing in the appearance of a Hottentot, but infinitely less so in the many ridiculous and false relations by which the public have been abused. They are a mild, quiet, and timid people; perfectly harmless, honest, faithful; and, though extremely phlegmatic, they are kind and affectionate to each other, and not incapable of strong attachments. A Hottentot would share his last morsel with his companions. They have little of that kind of art or cunning that savages generally possess. If

accused of crimes of which they have been guilty, they generally divulge the truth. They seldom quarrel among themselves or make use of provoking language. Though naturally of a fearful and cowardly disposition, they will run into the face of danger if led on by their superiors; and they suffer pain with great patience. They are by no means deficient in talent, but they possess little exertion to call it into action: the want of this was the principal cause of their ruin. The indolence of a Hottentot is a real disease, whose only remedy seems to be that of terror. Hunger is insufficient to effect the cure. Rather than to have the trouble of procuring food by the chase, or of digging the ground for roots, they will willingly fast the whole day, provided they may be allowed to sleep. Instances frequently occurred in the course of our journies, when our Hottentots have passed the day without a morsel of food, in preference of having the trouble to walk half a mile for a sheep. Yet, though they are so exceedingly patient of hunger, they are at the same time the greatest gluttons upon the face of the earth. Ten of our Hottentots ate a middling-sized ox, all but the two hind legs, in three days; but they had very little sleep during the time, and had fasted the two preceding days. With them the word is, to eat or to sleep. When they cannot indulge in the gratification of the one, they generally find immediate relief in flying to the other.

Their manner of eating marks the voracity of their appetite. Having cut from the animal a large steak, they enter one edge with the knife, and passing it round in a spiral manner till they come to the middle, they produce a string of meat two or three yards in length. The whole animal is presently cut into such strings; and while some are employed

in this business, and in suspending them on the branches of the shrubbery, others are broiling the strings coiled round and laid upon the ashes. When the meat is just warmed through, they grasp it in both hands, and applying one end of the string to the mouth, soon get through a yard of flesh. The ashes of the green wood that adhere to the meat serve as a substitute for salt. As soon as a string of meat has passed through their hands, they are cleaned by rubbing over different parts of their body. Grease thus applied from time to time, and accumulating perhaps for a whole year, sometimes melting by the side of a large fire and catching up dust and dirt, covers at length the surface of the body with a thick black coating, that entirely conceals the natural colour of the skin. This is discoverable only on the face and hands, which they keep somewhat cleaner than the other parts of the body, by rubbing them with the dung of cattle. This takes up the grease, upon which water would have no effect.

The dress of a Hottentot is very simple. It consists of a belt made of a thong cut from the skin of some animal. From this belt is suspended before a kind of case made out of the skin of the jackal. The shape is that of half a nine-pin cut longitudinally, and the convex and hairy side is outermost. The intention of this case is to receive those parts of the body for which most nations have adopted some sort of covering; but few, who are not entirely naked, have hit upon a less effectual one for such a purpose than that of the Hottentot. If the real intent of it was the promotion of decency, it should seem that he has widely missed his aim, as it is certainly one of the most immodest objects, in such a situation as he places it, that could have been con-

trived. From the back part of the belt or girdle hangs a piece of stiff dried skin, reaching scarcely to the middle of the thigh, cut into the shape of an acute isosceles triangle, with the point uppermost. Some wear a couple of such pieces. This contrivance is no better covering than the other; for when he walks quickly or musters up a running pace, it flies from one side to the other, and flaps backwards and forwards in such a manner as to conceal no particular part. This indeed does not seem to have been the purpose exactly for which it has been contrived. Nature having given to most animals a tail to fan themselves in hot weather and to lash away troublesome insects, and having left the Hottentot without one, he has adopted an artificial one to answer the same end. These constitute the whole of their summer dress. A great beau will probably fasten a bracelet of beads or a ring of copper round his wrist: but such are more properly ornaments belonging to the other sex.

The Hottentot women, fond of finery like those of most nations, by their immoderate rage for dress, accelerated the ruin of their husbands, which they themselves had brought on by as strong a rage for ardent spirits and tobacco. These two articles and glass beads were exchanged for their cattle—things useless, worthless, and even pernicious, for what was their only support, the soul of their existence. The thongs of dried skins that had encircled their legs from the ankle to the knee, as a protection against the bite of poisonous animals, were now despised and thrown away, and beads were substituted in their place. Thus what had been adopted as a matter of necessity and prudence, passed into an affair of fashion. Their necks, arms, and legs were loaded with glass beads: but the

largest and most splendid of these ornaments were bestowed upon the little apron, about seven or eight inches wide, that hangs from the waist and reaches barely to the middle of the thigh. Great pains seem to be taken by the women to attract notice towards this part of their persons. Large metal buttons, shells of the cypræa genus, with the apertures outwards, or any thing that makes a great show, are fastened to the borders of this apron.—Those who either cannot afford to wear glass beads, or have no taste for the fashion, wear an apron of a different sort, which has a very odd appearance: it is the skin of an animal cut into threads that hang in a bunch between the thighs, reaching about half-way to the knee; the exterior and anterior parts of the thigh are entirely bare. The threads of such an apron are frequently too thin and few to answer the purpose of concealment. Instead of the tail worn by the men, the women have a sheep's skin that entirely covers the posterior part of the body from the waist to the calf of the leg, and just wide enough to strike the exterior part of the thigh. The rattling of this hard and dry skin announces the approach of a Hottentot lady long before she makes her appearance. The rest of the body is naked. Some, however, wear skin-caps on their heads made up into different shapes, and ornamented as caprice may direct. In the winter months both sexes cover themselves with cloaks made of skins.

The custom of greasing the body and wrapping it in skins, has been the constant theme of abuse against this race of people by those who have written on the subject. There are always two ways of representing things, and unfortunately for the poor Hottentot, his character has been painted in

the worst light. To cover the body with some unctuous matter in a hot climate where water was extremely scarce, was a very natural resource to prevent the skin from being shrivelled and parched by the scorching rays of the sun, and has been adopted by most nations situated in or near the torrid zone. The oil that ran so profusely down "Aaron's beard, even to the skirts of his garment," was in all probability animal fat; for during the forty years that he and Moses occupied the children of Israel in the desert, with a promised land, it is not very likely they had a supply of vegetable oil; and though some late celebrated historical painters have clothed these leaders of the children of Israel in high-coloured garments trimmed with fringe and lace, it may be doubted if they had any other clothing than such as the skins of their sheep, and calves, and goats, supplied them with. If the practice of smearing the body with fat, were adopted in South-America, there would not probably be such numbers of objects, in the streets of Rio de Janeiro, labouring under that most disgusting and dreadful disorder, the elephantiasis. The Hottentots know nothing of such a complaint; nor did I perceive that any kind of cutaneous disease was prevalent among them.

The person of a Hottentot while young is by no means void of symmetry. They are clean-limbed, well-proportioned, and erect. Their joints, hands, and feet are remarkably small. No protuberance of muscle to indicate strength; but a body delicately formed as that of a woman, marks the inactive and effeminate mind of a Hottentot. The face is in general extremely ugly; but this differs very materially in different families, particularly in the nose, some of which are remarkably flat, and others

considerably raised. The colour of the eye is a deep chesnut: they are very long and narrow, removed to a great distance from each other; and the eyelids at the extremity next the nose, instead of forming an angle, as in Europeans, are rounded into each other exactly like those of the Chinese, to whom, indeed, in many other points, they bear a physical resemblance, that is sufficiently striking. The cheek-bones are high and prominent, and with the narrow-pointed chin form nearly a triangle. Their teeth are beautifully white. The colour of the skin is that of a yellowish brown or a faded leaf, but very different from the sickly hue of a person in the jaundice, which it has been described to resemble. The hair is of a very singular nature: it does not cover the whole surface of the scalp, but grows in small tufts at certain distances from each other, and, when kept short, has the appearance and feel of a hard shoe-brush, with this difference, that it is curled and twisted into small round lumps about the size of a marrowfat-pea. When suffered to grow, it hangs in the neck in hard twisted tassels like fringe.

Some of the women, when young, and previous to child-bearing, might serve as models of perfection in the human figure. Every joint and limb is rounded and well turned, and their whole body is without an angle or disproportionate protuberance. Their breasts are round, firm, and distant; but the nipple is unusually large and surrounded by an areola that is much elevated above the general surface of the breast. Their hands and feet are remarkably small and delicately turned; and in their gait they are not altogether devoid of grace. Their charms, however, are very fleeting. At an early period of life, and immediately after the first child,

their breasts begin to grow loose and flaccid, and, as old age approaches, become distended to an enormous size; the belly protrudes; and the posteriors, swelling out to incredible dimensions, give to the spine a degree of curvature inwards, that makes it appear as if the *os coccygis*, or bone at the lower extremity of the spine, was elongated and bent outwards, which is not the case. The mass that covers the posteriors has been found to be pure fat. Some other striking peculiarities in the conformation of Hottentot women will be noticed when speaking of the Bosjesmans, who seem to be the true aborigines of the country, unmixed with any other tribes of people.

It does not appear that the Hottentots are subject to any particular diseases. Life, if not taken away by accident or violence, is generally terminated by a gradual decay and exhausted nature, which generally happens at an earlier period of existence here, than in most countries of an equal temperature of climate. It is rare to see a Hottentot with sixty years upon his head; but it is also equally rare to see a cripple or deformed person among them. There are none who professedly practise the healing art; every one is his own physician. The colonists, in this respect, are no better served than the Hottentots. In the whole district of Graaff Reynet there is but one apothecary, and his residence is at the Drosdy.

Medicine, and astronomy, are two sciences, that may be supposed to have dated their origin from the first dawn of civilization; by one, men were taught to restore the vital functions that had lost their tone, and to repair the injured frame; by the other, they informed themselves of the different

periods of seed-time and harvest. Little as the Hottentots are acquainted with the one, they are still less so with the other. They have a name for the sun, another for the moon, and a third for the stars: but this is the extent of their astronomical knowledge. The division of time, by the motion of the heavenly bodies, was too subtle an operation, and required too much observation and profound thinking, for the careless and inattentive mind of a Hottentot. The period of a day may almost be said to be the extent of his reckoning. When he has occasion to refer to the time of the day, like all other nations who are without machines for marking the divisions of time, he will point out the place in the heavens where the sun then was. The periods that have past he can express only by saying they were before or after some memorable event. The season of the year is indicated by being so many moons before or after *uyntjes tyd*, or the time that the roots of the *iris edulis* are in season; a time particularly noticed by him, as these bulbs once constituted a considerable part of his vegetable food. I know not how far the numerals in his language proceed, but none of those of our party could tell beyond *five*, nor could any of them put two numbers together but by the assistance of their fingers. Yet they are very far from being a stupid people. They learn the Dutch language with great facility. They are excellent marksmen with the gun: and they are uncommonly clever in finding out a passage over a desert uninhabited country. By the quickness of their eye, they will discover deer, and other sorts of game, when very far distant; and they are equally expert in watching a bee to its nest. They no sooner hear the humming of the insect than they squat themselves on the ground, and, having caught it with the eye, follow

it to an incredible distance. The organ of sight, no doubt, is strengthened and improved by exercise. Seamen on board ships will discover objects at sea the moment they appear above the horizon, and long before they become visible to a passenger's eye.

Except in the preparation of poisons, making bows and arrows, musical instruments, coarse earthen ware, and sewing together the skins of sheep, for their winter garments, with sinews, or the intestines of animals, the Hottentots may be said to be entirely ignorant of arts and manufactures. The great point in which their invention appears to have been exercised, is in the construction of their language. Of all the methods that have been adopted in language, by different nations, for the purpose of expressing objects, and conveying ideas, in a clear and unequivocal manner, that which has been hit upon by the Hottentots, is certainly the most extraordinary. Almost all their monosyllables, and the leading syllable of compound words, are thrown out of the mouth with a sudden retraction of the tongue from the teeth or the palate, against one of which it had been pressed, according to the signification of the word about to be uttered; for the same sound, with the dental, will have a very different meaning with the palatial retraction of the tongue. The noise made by the dental is exactly that which is sometimes used to express impatience, and the palatial is much more full and sonorous, and not unlike the clacking of a hen that has young chickens. This sound is never made to precede or to follow a syllable, but is thrown out at the same time, and incorporated with it. All languages in their infancy consisted probably of simple or monosyllabic sounds; but as these could convey only a

very limited number of ideas, recourse was had to inflexion of voice and composition of the simple sounds to make the vocabulary more copious. The division of such simple sounds into their elements, and by the various combinations of these elements to form an almost unlimited number of new sounds, was one of the most wonderful inventions in the history of man, and much beyond the genius of a Hottentot. He has done, however, all that he found to be necessary by a very few compound words, and by the clacking with the tongue. In the first formation of his language, nature seems to have been his guide. The croaking of a frog is readily recognized in *kraak* or *kraaie*; the lowing of an ox in *'mnoo*; the mewling of a cat in *meau*; the neighing of a horse in *kahæ*; the breaking of the sea upon the shore in *hurroo*; all of which are correspondent words in the language of this people.—Many instances, besides these, sufficiently prove that the vocables were adopted in imitation of the sounds proceeding from the different objects they were meant to express. In the origin, they might probably be much closer imitations. The enunciation of sounds is liable to undergo many alterations in passing from one generation to another, even among nations that have the means of catching the nice inflexions of voice, and of handing them down, in a visible form, to posterity.

The genius of a language is generally discoverable in the application of new words to new ideas. The Hottentots who had never seen nor heard the report of a gun before their unfortunate connection with Europeans, had a new word to invent in order to express it. They called it *kaboo*, and pronounced the word in so emphatic a manner that it was scarcely possible to mistake their meaning. The *ka*

is thrown out with a strong palatial stroke of the tongue, in imitation of the sound given by the stroke of the flint against the cover of the pan; and with outstretched lips, a full mouth, and prolonged sound, the *boo* sends forth the report. This language at first appears to be of such a nature as to make it impossible for an European ever to acquire; the difficulty, however, which is chiefly occasioned by the action of the tongue, is soon got over. Most of the Dutch peasantry in the distant districts speak it; and many of them are so very much accustomed to the use of it, that they introduce into their own language a motion of the organ of speech sufficiently distinct to show from whence they procured it.

Notwithstanding the inhuman treatment that the Hottentots experience from the Dutch farmers, the latter could very ill want the assistance of the former; and, were they sensible of their own interest, and the interest of their posterity, instead of oppressing, they would offer them every encouragement. To guard their numerous herds; to drive them from place to place in search of food and water, sometimes on plains which produce not a shrub to screen them from the scorching rays of an almost vertical sun at one part of the year, or to afford them a shelter from the cold winds, frost, and snow that happen in the other, would ill agree with the temper or with the constitution of the colonists; yet should the present system of oppression continue, the time is not far distant when their own children must take upon them the charge now committed to Hottentots. Slaves are too expensive. In the whole district of Graaff Reynet there are not more than six or seven hundred blacks, which is about one to each family; and the said district contains about 10,000 Hottentots great and small. The total number of

this people in the whole colony may be about fifteen thousand. Broken up and dispersed as the tribes of this nation now are, few of their ancient usages are retained among them. If they ever had a religion of any sort, all traces of it are now lost: they marry without any kind of ceremony, and inter their dead in the same manner. One custom, however, still remained, which seemed to be pretty generally observed: this was that of shaving the heads of young girls as soon as the first symptoms of maturity began to appear; at the same time all the ornaments worn on the neck, legs, and arms, are removed, the body for once in their lifetime clean washed and scoured; and, during the continuance of the periodical symptoms, they are restricted to a milk diet, and are not suffered to mix in the company of men.

On the morning of the 29th of August we left the Zwart-kop's river, and, proceeding to the eastward about twenty miles, crossed a ford of the Sunday river, and encamped upon its bank. At this place it was broad and deep, and without any perceptible current. The whole channel of the river was buried in thick woods that extended forty or fifty yards from the margin of the water upon each bank. The trees consisted chiefly of the Karroo mimosa, a species of *rhus*, and a narrow-leafed willow. The water was considerably impregnated with salt. At the feet of the hills, indeed, near which it flowed, were numbers of heaps of a white saline substance light and frothy; and from the under surfaces of the projecting strata of rotten sand-stone were suspended a great quantity of saline stalactites, whose bases were tinged with green, perhaps from their being impregnated with a solution of copperas or green vitriol.

On the banks of this river we were disturbed in the night, for the first time, by a troop of ele-

applications to their sovereign for it. The story of some Dutch farmer being murdered in Kaffer-land, where he had gone for the sake of exchanging trinkets for cattle, had got hold of their minds, and it was no easy matter to make them conceive the difference between going officially, in the service of government, to the Kaffer king, and that of clandestinely entering a country with the view of carrying on an illicit traffic with the subjects of that country. From the time they had known our intentions they had daily teazed the landrost with their proposal of twenty men, till at length it was found necessary to silence the application by saying, that if they had any apprehensions as to their personal safety, they were at full liberty to return to Graaff Reynet.—Though nothing more was said on the subject, there was reason to suppose that the people had assembled for the purpose of accompanying us. To a Dutch peasant a jaunt from home, on a hunting party, or to see new parts of the country, is supreme felicity: but an opportunity of getting into the Kaffer country, so rich in cattle, was not to be resisted. Some of the farmers it was absolutely necessary to take along with us, as none of our own party were acquainted with a single step of the country. Those that seemed to be the most proper for this purpose were, an old man from Upper Zuure Veldt, and Rensburg, one of the companions of Jacob Van Reenen on the journey along the eastern coast in search of the unfortunate passengers and crew of the Grosvenor that was wrecked on the shore of the *Hamboonas*. This at least was the ostensible motive for that journey.

Rensburg was on many accounts a desirable companion on the present occasion. He was well acquainted with the country: he was an excellent

marksman; and he had with him an old Hottentot that was still better: from this man he generally reckoned upon a beast for every ball. Two or three others joined us in the evening at the place of encampment, under pretence of looking after their oxen with which they had furnished us; and the first night that we passed in Kaffer-land, the number of peasants that had contrived to smuggle themselves into that country, amounted to ten.

We had not travelled many miles beyond the Hassagai-bosch river, till the discovery of the whole surface of the country in flames, indicated our approach to some of the stations of the Kaffers. We pitched our tents in fact at night on the banks of the *Kareeka*, amidst several hundreds of these people, who, on our approach, came swarming out of the thick shrubbery that skirted the river. A party of women were the first who advanced to salute us, laughing and dancing round the waggons, and putting on all the coaxing manners they could invent, in order to procure from us tobacco and brass buttons. Good temper, animation, and a cheerful turn of mind, beamed in all their countenances. We found them to be modest without reserve; extremely curious without being troublesome; lively but not impudent; and sportive without the least shadow of being lascivious. Their personal charms were not of a very captivating nature, though, getting over the prejudice of colour, which was that of a dark glossy brown, verging on black, several of them might have been accounted handsome. The rapid movement of their dark sparkling eyes gave animation to their countenances: their teeth were beautifully white and regular; they had neither the thick lips nor flat noses of Africans in general; and the whole contour of the face and head was equally

well formed as those of Europeans; but the most striking feature in their character was a degree of sprightliness, activity, and vivacity, that distinguished them from the women of most nations but little civilized, who are generally reserved to strangers. Bordering upon the country of the Hottentots, their manners, their persons, and their whole character, seemed to be as widely removed from this phlegmatic race as the equator from the pole. The Hottentot young women had much the advantage, however, of the Kaffers in point of figure. The latter were mostly of low stature, very strong-limbed, and particularly muscular in the leg; but the good humour that constantly beamed upon their countenances made ample amends for any defect in their persons.

The men, on the contrary, were the finest figures I ever beheld: they were tall, robust, and muscular; their habits of life had induced a firmness of carriage, and an open, manly manner, which, added to the good nature that overspread their features, showed them at once to be equally unconscious of fear, suspicion, and treachery. A young man of about twenty, of six feet ten inches high, was one of the finest figures that perhaps was ever created. He was a perfect Hercules; and a cast from his body would not have disgraced the pedestal of that deity in the Farnese palace. Many of them had indeed very much the appearance of bronze figures. Their skins, which were nearly black, and their short curling hair, were rubbed over with a solution of red ochre, and the tint it produced on the dark ground was very far from having any disagreeable effect. Some few were covered with skin-cloaks, but the greater part were entirely naked. The women wore long cloaks that extended below

the calf of the leg; and their heads were covered with leather caps ornamented with beads, with shells, and with pieces of polished copper and iron, that were disposed in a variety of forms; but the fashion of the cap was nearly the same in all.

We distributed a quantity of tobacco among the women, who carried it to their fathers and husbands. These had not proved such successful pleaders as the females. In the evening they sent us in return some baskets of milk. These baskets were made from a species of *cyperus*, a strong reedy grass that grew in the springs of Zuure Veld. The workmanship was exceedingly clever and neat, and the texture so close, that they were capable of containing the thinnest fluid. The women informed us that the making of these baskets was one part of their employment; and they seemed to feel a pleasure in our admiration of them. They were all nearly made after one model, which in shape was that of a common bee-hive. As they are never washed nor cleaned, the milk thrown into them almost immediately coagulates, in which state it is always used by this people, and never sweet from the animal. Having no bread, nor vegetables, nor roots, but such as grew spontaneously in the country, and as they seldom kill any of their cattle for the sake of the flesh, the necessity of taking something solid into the stomach led them, perhaps, to adopt this manner of drinking their milk; and the best proof of its nutritious quality, in such a state, was the general healthy appearance and vigour of their persons.

Towards the setting of the sun the whole plain was covered with cattle, which in vast herds were brought in from every quarter at the signal of command, which was a particular kind of whistling

noise made with the mouth; at another whistle the cows separated from the herd, and came forward to have their milk drawn from them. This, and the management of the dairy, form a part of the employment of the men. In the morning a third signal sent them out to graze. The Kaffers and their cattle seemed perfectly to understand each other.

Though at this place there could not be fewer than three hundred men and women, exclusive of a numerous troop of young boys and girls who were obliged to keep at a distance; yet not a hut of any kind was to be seen. These were all concealed in the midst of the shrubbery: they consisted only of a few living twigs, whose tops were bent and interwoven into each other, forming a frame, of the shape of a parabola, about five feet high and eight in diameter. These frames were rudely covered over with branches of trees and long grass, and were evidently intended only as temporary abodes.

A chief of the name of *Tooley* paid us a visit, drank a few glasses of wine which he seemed very much to relish, and received a small present of beads and tobacco; but the object that seemed most to engage his attention was the wish to procure for himself a pair of breeches. Among our party were a few tolerably stout and tall men, yet none of their breeches would suffer Tooley's thighs to enter into them. He was a strong muscular man, of six feet in height, and well made. He was good-humoured and cheerful, but did not appear to be possessed of much intellect. He declined entering into any conversation that led to the purport of our journey, and said that his brother *Malloo*, who was one of the first of the Kaffer chiefs, would talk to us on that subject. An express was therefore sent for

Malloo, who was at a little distance on the upper part of the river. It was not long before he made his appearance, followed by a third chief of the name of *Etonie*.

In a conversation with these chiefs, they were asked whether they were not acquainted with the treaty that had been made a long time ago between the Christians and Kaffers, and renewed at the conclusion of the late hostilities, which treaty had fixed the Great Fish river as the line of demarkation between the two nations? Malloo, who spoke for the rest, replied, that they knew it very well. If so, it was demanded why had they infringed that treaty by passing the said river and taking possession of the country belonging to the colonists, to the great injury of the latter, who had been obliged to quit their habitations? Malloo replied in a manner that showed he was prepared to answer—that there were no habitations in that part of the country where they had fixed themselves; and as to their motive for passing the boundary, he could only say, for his own part, that he had come over for one of the reasons that had carried the colonists *first* after the treaty into the Kaffer country, which was that of hunting for game.

What this chief stated in his reply was perfectly correct. The Dutch peasantry have not only gone into the Kaffer country since the year 1793, to hunt for the larger sort of game, particularly the hippopotamus, that abounds in all the great rivers of that country, but all those who dwell near the extremity of the colony, upon the Great Fish river, have always used, and still continue to consider, the Kaffer side of the river as their own, have sown, and planted, and driven over their cattle to graze. Some of the in-

habitants of *Bruyntjes Hoogté* had even gone amongst the *Ghonaquas*, a tribe of people produced between Kaffers and Hottentots, but living under the former; had taken possession of the choicest part of their country, well watered by two plentiful streams, the Kat and the Kaapna; had laid out the extent of ground that each meant to occupy; planted vines and other fruits; and, certain that the avaricious and unjust views of the government would keep equal pace with their own, joined by twenty or thirty names that they contrived to muster from different parts of the colony, they had the audacity to petition Sir James Craig to grant them as an indemnification for their losses by the Bosjesmans and the Kaffers, a small piece of ground on the Kaapna; and that it would still further oblige them if he could extend it to the Kat river. This small piece of ground is only about five-and-forty miles beyond the present boundary. The daring and impudent falsehoods on which the letter was grounded were easily seen through by Sir James Craig, and their petition was very properly rejected. The eyes of the colonists have long been directed towards the two rivers, the Kat and the Kaapna. A native voyager in this country, whose mind seemed only to be occupied in hunting elephants, shooting sea-cows, and collecting gold dust, could not pass without noticing this part of Kaffer-land. In a Journal, which has been published By Captain Rio, it is mentioned: "We came to a vast plain extending as far as a "river called Kaapna, or fine meadows, which name "it highly merits from its delightful situation. The "whole country is intersected with rivulets capa- "ble of overflowing the adjacent meadows, and pos- "sesses every requisite for becoming a most *conve-* "*nient* and *charming settlement*." Such a description was sufficient to send a Dutch farmer as far as the

Tambookies, if he could only be persuaded there would be no personal danger. Such are the views of those people, who have neither sense of honour, regard for truth, or feelings of justice or humanity to direct their proceedings.

The chiefs were told, that if some few of the colonists had been so imprudent as to transgress the treaty, they had done it contrary to the express orders, and without the knowledge, of government: that the colony was now in the possession of a great and powerful sovereign, the king of England: that one of his first chiefs had deputed us to say, that the established boundary should be observed on the part of the colonists; but he expected also that all those chiefs, who had spread themselves over the country of the colonists, with their families, and dependants, and cattle, would, without any further delay, quietly and peaceably return into their own country; and, as a proof of the good intentions and friendship of the English government towards the Kaffer nation, we were now on our journey to their great chief, or king *Gaika*, carrying for him a present from the English governor at the Cape.

On hearing this, the Kaffer chiefs were apparently uneasy; and it was soon discovered that they not only were on bad terms with the king, but that they had been obliged to fly their country in order to avoid the effects of his displeasure. They now began to change their former tone, and to entreat that an intercession should be made for them with their king, and gave a promise, on condition of a *messenger of peace* being sent to them, immediately to return into their own country. Such a messenger is known by this people from his laying his *hassagai* or spear on the ground at the distance

of two hundred paces from those to whom he is sent, and by advancing from thence with extended arms. Being assured that every attempt to bring about an amicable adjustment between the king and the fugitive chiefs would be tried, and that from the apparent willingness, on their part, to a reconciliation, there could be little doubt of success, they received each a small present, consisting of tobacco, knives, flints, and steels, tinder-boxes, and a few glass beads. These are the sort of articles which the Dutch farmers have been in the habit of exchanging for their valuable breed of cattle.

The three chiefs were all stout, well-formed men; but Etonie in particular might be accounted handsome: he had a lively pleasing countenance that always wore a smile, his eyes were vivid and active, his teeth were white as the purest ivory, and his nose was not in the least flattened, but exactly of the same form as that of the European. In their dress they had nothing particular to distinguish them from those they governed, except a slender brass chain which hung suspended on the left side, from a wreath of small polished copper beads that encircled the upper part of the head. They wore long cloaks of calves' skins, which, being well stretched and dressed, were very light and pliant. Broad rings of ivory, cut out of the solid tusk of the elephant, were worn upon the left arm, above the elbow. Bracelets of copper and of iron surrounded their wrists, and rings of these metals were also worn on the legs above the ankles. Glass beads surrounded their necks; and many of the men had porcupine quills stuck through the ear.

Neither had the wives of the chiefs any distinction of dress from the rest of the women. They all wore

caps, made of skins, setting close to the head, and hanging behind, and down each side, in long divided flaps. Each seemed to have decorated their dress, without any fixed order, as caprice had suggested, or as their circumstances would allow.—Small beads of copper, rings of iron, brass buttons, old knee-buckles, or whatsoever metallic material had fallen into their hands, found a place on some part of their dress. Some had a brass button stuck in one ear, and in the other a string of glass beads or a shell. They had no change of habit, but each carried her whole wardrobe about her person.—Some had not fewer than fifty different strings of necklaces about the neck; a number of rings round their legs and arms of copper and iron; and on their calf-skin cloaks were stitched several rows, from top to bottom, of old buttons, as various in shape, size, and fashion, as a button-maker's card. Some had festoons of small cypræa shells round their caps; others had made them into bracelets and necklaces. Suspended from the neck most of them carried the shell of a small land tortoise, (the *testudo pusilla)* which held a quantity of red ochre, and a thin piece of leather to rub it upon their faces.

The young boys were perfectly naked; and the only ornament about them was a small tuft of the long white hair from the rump of the springbok, which was stuck upon the crown of the head.

On the second of September we skirted the banks of the *Kareeka,* towards the sea-shore, perpetually passing through multitudes of Kaffers and their herds of cattle. Of the latter, the collected opinion of the party was, that there could not have been fewer seen, in the course of this day's journey, than five thousand head. Among these were oxen of re-

markable size and strength, vast numbers of cows, in general much larger and handsomer than those of the colony, some of them not unlike the Alderney cow; others were without horns, small and strong, resembling the black cattle that come down from the Highlands of Scotland. The horns of the large oxen were twisted with great pains into a variety of shapes. The points of some were brought to meet under the neck; others were drawn into straight lines, projecting horizontally from each side of the head; some had one horn pointed directly into the air, and the other to the ground; and others, rising parallel from their bases, had their points turned back, which gave them the appearance of huge antelopes. Some had large circular pieces cut out of the dewlap; others had this part cut into strings, and hanging in tassels. Not a sheep nor goat were to be seen. The Kaffers, in fact, never breed any of these animals. Dogs in innumerable quantities made their appearance, but so miserably poor, that it was painful to look at them. They seemed to be a small kind of cur. They had no horses. Dogs and cattle were the only animals they possessed.

A rising eminence between the Bosjesman and Kareeka rivers, which at this place were not very distant, commanded a beautiful view of the surrounding country, and a great extent of sea-coast. From these elevated plains a sudden depression of the earth descends towards the sea-shore, and particularly between the mouths of the two above-mentioned rivers. The ground has here been rent and torn into vast chasms, separated by high ridges of rude and massy rock. The glens were choaked up with thick, tall shrubbery, and the smaller kinds of the trees of the country. These wild and dismal dens, of many miles in extent, were considered by

Rensberg, the person before mentioned, as the nursery of elephants, where, he asserted, he had once seen in one troop between four and five hundred of these enormous brutes, scouring the plains, and making for the forests.

Several of the persons with me, pretended to have been eye-witnesses to the manner in which elephants performed the connubial rites; and they invariably asserted, that the female went down on her knees to receive the male; which, however, is not the case. The manner in which this huge animal contrived to propagate the species, is a subject that has long engaged the closet-naturalists of Europe, and which has produced many strange opinions and hypotheses. Some imagined that the feelings of this animal were so delicate, and others that its sense of slavery was so powerful, that shame in the one instance, and indignation in the other, were impediments to their indulging, in a domesticated state, in the gratifications of love. Such-like hypotheses, founded on false suggestions of travellers, have of late been most completely set aside by facts performed in the presence of many hundred spectators. Several English gentlemen, resident in the interior parts of India, have bred elephants. In a letter from one of these gentlemen to his friend, dated Tipperah, July 11, 1793, the whole process of courtship, consummation, and time of gestation, are minutely stated. From this letter the following are points that appear to be most unquestionably ascertained.

First: That tame elephants will procreate in their domestic state, and perform the act of love without shame, and without feeling any sense of delicacy beyond other brute animals.

Secondly: That the period of gestation is about twenty-one months.

Thirdly: That they copulate invariably in the same manner as a horse with a mare, but with much less vigour. And,

Fourthly, That the female will again receive the male in five or six months after delivery.

A copy of the above mentioned letter having been transmitted to the late ingenious Sir William Jones, the relation produced from the sportive fancy of that celebrated genius the commencement of a mock-heroic poem, in which, though very short, the marks of exuberant imagination strongly appeared. He intitles it Pelion and Ossa.

> "As in Jove's war, by rebel giants pil'd,
> "Enormous Pelion tower'd on Ossa wild,
> "*Behadur* thus, the Pelion of our wood,
> "On sleek *Peauree*, broad as Ossa, stood," *&c.*

The gigantic elephant is a harmless animal in comparison to the lion, the leopard, wolves, and hyænas, and other beasts of prey with which this wild part of the country abounds; and these even are much less to be feared than a nest of the most atrocious villains that ever disgraced and disturbed society, which these thickets conceal. The gang consists of seven or eight Dutch peasants, and a body of armed Hottentots which they retain in their service. They have no fixed habitation, but rove about from place to place in the woods. They live by the plunder taken from the neighbouring peasantry, and from unfortunate sufferers by shipwreck, which frequently happens on this wild coast. They are all outlaws; and rewards have been offered by

government for them dead or alive; but the peasantry are so much afraid of them, that none dare approach the place. This gang is known to be intimately connected with the emigrant Kaffers, who have been instigated by them to continue in the colony.

On the morning of the third of September, as we were preparing to proceed, we had a visit from the four chiefs, *Tatchoo*, *Comma*, *Yaloosa*, and *Hamboona*, having each with him a detachment of his vassals. They at once confessed their fears of returning into their own country, lest the king should make war upon them; and pressed us to intercede with him for them.

The route from Hassagai-bosch river had been taken out of the common track, in order to speak with the Kaffer chiefs, as well as to have a view of that part of the coast where the Bosjesman and the Kareeka rivers discharged themselves into the sea. Over the grassy plains of Zuure Veldt there is little difficulty in finding a road, where the deep glens, through which the branches of rivers run, can be avoided; and we had met with no obstacle till our arrival at the *Kowie*, which falls into the sea a little to the eastward of the Kareeka. In order to cross this river it was necessary to descend from the plain into a deep chasm two miles in length; not only down a steep precipice strewed over with fragments of rock, but in several places we had to cut a road through thick clumps of brushwood. A more difficult and dreadful place was certainly never attempted by wheel-carriages. A single false step might have been attended with the total destruction of waggons and cattle. In the space of two hours, however, we found ourselves in the bottom, where

we passed along a narrow defile, hemmed in on either side, sometimes by woods of tall trees creeping up the steep faces of the mountains, and at others between two walls of naked rock. The difficulty of the descent had considerably exhausted the oxen; but to rise the opposite hill, "*hic labour, hoc opus "fuit.*" In vain the animals strove; the drivers shouted, and stamped, and flogged with their enormous whips, and the Dutchmen swore. The first waggon got about a hundred yards up the ascent, which was near a mile in length, but was unable to be moved a step higher. After an hour's trial, bruising and fatiguing the oxen to no purpose, they had recourse to the method that ought in the first instance to have been adopted. The reserved oxen were yoked before the others, and thus, by double teams, the waggons were at last drawn out of this horrible chasm; not, however, without producing an instance of brutality and cruelty that will scarcely be supposed to exist in a civilized country. While the poor animals were struggling and tearing on their knees, and exerting their strength to the utmost to draw up the waggons, the owner of one of the teams, enraged at their want of success, drew out of its case a large crooked knife with a sharp point, and fixing on one of the oxen for the object on which he might give vent to his fury, cut him with several gashes across the ribs, in the flank, and in the fleshy part of the thigh, some of them from six to seven inches long, and so deep that when the animal walked, they opened two inches in width. The size of the wounds is not mentioned loosely for the sake of exaggeration, but is given from actual measurement. The ribs were literally laid bare, and the blood ran down in streams; yet in this condition the poor beast was obliged to draw in the waggon for the space of three hours, after having

received such brutal treatment. By two of the gashes a large piece of flesh was very nearly taken out of the thick part of the thigh; and had it not been for the irritable state of mind into which the savage conduct of the fellow had thrown me, but more particularly lest it should seem to give a kind of countenance to his brutality, I should have asked him to have cut it entirely out, as it could not materially have increased the pain to the beast; not for the sake of proving the delicacy of an Abyssinian beefsteak, quivering with life, but to have observed the progress of the wound. In three or four days the gashes were skinned over, and appeared to give the animal little uneasiness, but the cicatrices would always remain; and from these sort of scars on the bodies of many of the oxen, it is to be feared that cutting is a practice but too common among them, notwithstanding that most of the peasantry of the party seemed to be shocked at it. This was the second instance of the kind that I had occasion to witness in the course of this tour; the other was perhaps the more cruel, as it was exercised on parts of the body more susceptible of pain, the nose and the tongue. In this instance the animal bellowed most hideously, burst from the yoke, and plunging into the thickets, made his escape. Even in the neighbourhood of the Cape, where, from a more extended civilization, one would expect a greater degree of humanity, several atrocious acts of the kind are notorious. One of the inhabitants, better known from his wealth and his vulgarity than from any good quality he possesses, boasts that he can at any time start his team on a full gallop by whetting his knife only on the side of the waggon. In exhibiting this masterly experiment, the effect of a long and constant perseverance in brutality, to some of his friends, the waggon was overturned, and one

of the company, unluckily not the proprietor, had his leg broken. Hottentot's Holland's kloof, a steep pass over the first range of mountains beyond the promontory of the Cape, has been the scene of many an instance of this sort of cruelty. I have heard a fellow boast, that, after cutting and slashing one of his oxen in this kloof, till an entire piece of a foot square did not remain in the whole hide, he stabbed him to the heart; and the same person is said, at another time, to have kindled a fire under the belly of an ox, because it could not draw the waggon up the same kloof.

As it was our intention to examine the mouth of the Great Fish river, the boundary of the colony to the eastward, it was thought advisable to send forward, in the mean time, two interpreters to the Kaffer king, carrying with them a small present in the name of the governor of the Cape, in order to obtain permission, as ambassadors from the said governor, to enter his territories, and to pay our respects to him. By this step we were not only more likely to secure his protection, but it would also show him that the treaty made with them in the time of the governor Van Plettenberg, and renewed in the year 1793, was held sacred by the English government. The distance from the place where we now were to that of his residence was calculated to be a journey of five days: the eighth day therefore was fixed on for the interpreters to meet us in Kaffer-land at a certain spot, well known to them and to our guide Rensberg, which was a journey of two days' distance from the Kaffer court.

On the fourth, therefore, the interpreters proceeded to the eastward, and we directed our route towards the mouth of the Great Fish river. The

country over which we passed was perfectly flat; and in those parts where the Kaffers had not yet been, there was abundance of long grass. On approaching the sea-coast we observed a long train of fires; and, supposing them to have been made by a party of Kaffers stationed there, we turned a little out of the way towards the quarter from whence the smoke proceeded; but being to leeward of it, and the wind increasing, the waggons were in the midst of the fire before we perceived it; and the smoke was so thick and acrid, that it was impossible to see the length of the team. The oxen, being burnt in the feet, became unmanageable and galloped off in great confusion, the dogs howled, and there was a general uproar. The smoke was suffocating; the flames blazed up on each side of the waggons, which, to those especially that contained a quantity of gunpowder, was very alarming. The oxen, however, by sagacity, or by chance, had set their heads against the wind and soon galloped through it. The flames ran in all directions among the long dry grass and heathy plants with incredible celerity. The face of the country for several miles was a sheet of fire, and the air was obscured with a cloud of smoke. We had yet a considerable extent of country to pass among black ashes, beyond which we presently reached the mouth of the Great Fish river, where we pitched our tents for the night.

Like all the African rivers that discharge themselves into the sea on the eastern coast, the mouth of the Great Fish river was nearly sanded up. The quantity, however, of water brought down by it keeps open a constant channel, which, at the lowest ebb, seemed to be deep enough in every part for the admission of boats. Within the bar of sand it was from three to four hundred yards in width,

and appeared to be very deep. The Portugueze, in their early voyages, discovered this river, and gave to it the name of Rio Infanté. Thinking that it might admit of security for their shipping within the bar, they built a fort upon the left bank, and kept there a small establishment for a short time; till the discovery of Rio de la Goa, farther to the north-east, promising more solid advantages, made them abandon Rio Infanté. The banks descended with a fine smooth slope from the elevated plains on each side, and were covered with grass to the water's edge. That on the Kaffer side was beautifully skirted with thick woods. Towards the evening a vast number of *Hippopotami*, or sea-cows as they are called by the Dutch, were seen with their heads above the surface; but keeping close to the opposite shore, they were too far to be easily hit with a musket ball. Several of the paths of these animals led from various parts of the river to a spring of fresh water about a mile distant. To this spring they go in the night time to drink, the water of the river, for a considerable distance from the mouth, being salt. They also graze during the night, and brouse among the shrubbery. Short-sighted man would be apt to say, that the Providence of Nature should seem to have slept, or that she had committed a mistake, when she placed this unwieldy misshapen animal in an element where it cannot exist, and in which are not to be found the means of its sustenance, for it eats nothing that the rivers or waters afford.

The latitude of the mouth of the Great Fish river we found to be 33° 25′ south, and longitude 27° 37′ east. The distance from the Cape, as before mentioned, is about six hundred miles.

The coast, as far as could be seen from the high hillocks of sand, was wild and rocky, and without bay or indent.

The well-clothed plains of Zuure Veldt, when inhabited by the Dutch, abounded with a variety of game, especially of the antelope tribe; but since the arrival of the Kaffers, they have mostly been destroyed or chased into some other part of the country. The manner in which these people hunt, is not only a very destructive one, but it so much frightens those animals that may chance to escape, that they abandon the place. A large party, consisting sometimes of several hundreds, men, women, and children, surround a plain on which they have perceived a herd of antelopes. As soon as they have formed the circle, each proceeds towards the centre of it, narrowing the diameter, and closing upon each other, till the animals are completely fenced in. Antelopes, particularly that species called the springbok, like sheep, always follow where one leads. As soon, therefore, as the hunters have approached within a certain distance, an opening is made in the circle for the nearest animals to pass. All the rest follow in a line; and while by rushing together they retard each other, the men, armed with spears, close in upon the line, and make dreadful havock among them. Scarcely a springbok is now to be met with in Zuure Veldt. We found the steenbok, the boschbok, the rietbok, and the orabie, towards the extremity of the colony, and shot several *hartebeests*. This is one of the finest animals of the family of antelopes. The male is about seven feet and a half long, and five feet high, and the female six and a half feet long, and four feet high: the horns branch out of a single trunk that projects about two inches from the forehead. The mouth, and

indeed the whole head, resembles that of the bovine tribe, from whence it has obtained in the *Systema Naturæ* the specific name of *bubalis*.

All the chasms with which the plains of this part of the country are intersected, and the banks of all the rivers, the sides of the knolls, and the range of hills that terminates this division to the northward, were covered with wood. This consisted generally of a tall luxuriant shrubbery, out of which sprang up in places, sometimes singly and frequently in clumps, large forest trees: of these the *geelhout* was the most lofty, and being here disentangled from the pendulous lichen that cramped its growth in the great forests of Van Slaaden's river, showed itself as a beautiful tree. An euphorbia, throwing out a number of naked arms from a straight trunk thirty or forty feet high, held a distinguished place among the shrubbery. But one of the largest and most showy trees, and at this time in the height of its bloom, was the Kaffer's bean-tree, the *erythrina corallodendrum*, so called from the colour and resemblance of its large clusters of papilionaceous flowers to branches of red coral. Numbers of beautiful birds, such as small paroquets, touracos, woodpeckers, and others, were fluttering about these trees for the sake of the juices yielded by the flowers. The coral-tree, like most dazzling beauties, has its imperfection: the leaves are deciduous, and the blossoms, like those of the almond, have decayed before the young leaves have burst their buds. Not so with the Hottentot's bean: the clusters of scarlet flowers intermingled with the small and elegant dark-green foliage, gave it a distinguished place among the tall trees of the kloofs, and the thick shrubbery on the sides of the swells. This plant is the African lignum vitæ, the *guajacum Afrum* of

Linnæus, and the *schotia speciosa* of the *Hortus Kewensis*. The wood, however, is not sufficiently hard to be converted to the same purposes as lignum vitæ, nor is the tree large enough to make it of any particular use. The seeds of this leguminous plant are eaten by the Hottentots, and sometimes also are used by the colonists. Two plants of the palm tribe were frequently met with; one, the *zamia cycadis*, or Kaffer's bread-tree, growing on the plains; and the other, also a species of the same genus, skirting the springs and rivulets: the fruit of the latter was called wild coffee, and substituted by the peasantry for this berry. The *strelitzia regina* also, now in full and beautiful bloom, grew every where in wide-spreading patches in the vicinity of the Great Fish river, but not one of the new species, discovered about twenty miles to the northward of Zwart Kop's river, could be found among them. The cerulean blue nectarium of the reginæ seemed to be uniformly faded, and it lost its colour by a short exposure to the weather, which did not appear to be the case with that of violet blue of the *teretifolia*. The seed of the reginæ is eaten both by the Kaffers and Hottentots. A great variety of bulbous rooted plants were now springing out of the ground; and several species of those elegant families the *gladiolus*, *ixia*, *morœa*, and the *iris*, were in full bloom. That singular plant the *tumus elephantiopus*, so called from a protuberance thrown from the root resembling the foot of an elephant, was met with only in this part of the country. Several species of *xeranthemum* and *gnaphalium* decorated the grassy plains with their brilliant colours of red, yellow, and silky white. The Dutch in the colony name these, *flowers of seven years' duration*; but in Europe we extend the idea to *everlastings*.

In two days after leaving the mouth of the river, and skirting its banks, we came to the first ford. The moment we began to descend the heights towards the level of the river, an extraordinary increase of temperature was felt; and in the course of an hour the thermometer, which stood at noon at 72°, had ascended to 102° in the shade, at which point it remained, at the ford of the river, for four hours. When exposed to the direct rays of the sun, the temperature was increased only four degrees. The wind was due north, and remarkably strong; and the stream of air was so heated, that it was scarcely possible to bear exposure to it for any length of time. At night it blew a hurricane, and obliged us to strike the tents. It may be remarked, that the meridian altitude of the sun on that day was only fifty-one degrees, and that the general surface of the country, from which the wind blew, was covered with thick shrubbery; that on the preceding night, near the same place, the thermometer was down to 52°; and that on the following day, on the same spot, and with the same wind, but less strong, it ascended no higher than 71°. These circumstances render it very difficult, if not impossible, to account for so high a degree of temperature.

The following day we passed the Great Fish river, though not without some difficulty, the banks being high and steep, the stream strong, the bottom rocky, and the water deep. Some fine trees of the willow of Babylon, or a variety of that species, skirted the river at this place. The opposite side presented a very beautiful country, well wooded and watered, and plentifully covered with grass, among which grew in great abundance a species of indigo, apparently the same as that described by Mr. Masson as the *candicans*.

The first night that we encamped in the Kaffer country was near a stream called *Kowsha*, which falls into the Great Fish river. On the following day we passed the villages of *Maloo* and *Tooley*, the two chiefs and brothers we had seen in Zuure Veldt, delightfully situated on two eminences rising from the said streamlet. We also passed several villages placed along the banks of the *Guengka* and its branches, and the next day we came to a river of very considerable magnitude called the *Keiskamma*. Though no part of the colony we had yet passed through could be compared to that portion of the Kaffers' country which lay between the Great Fish river and the Keiskamma; and though the huts of which the villages were composed appeared to be perfect and in good order, yet no vestige of human industry seemed to accompany them, nor any traces but the buildings, that might lead to suppose the country to be inhabited. In fact, during the two days we had travelled in Kaffer-land not a human being had made its appearance, except one of our interpreters with a Kaffer chief, whom we met at the close of the second day, and who had been dispatched by the king to invite and to conduct us to his place of residence.

That part of the Keiskamma where we had encamped was not fordable by waggons: had it even admitted a passage, the country on the opposite side was so very mountainous and woody, that, so far from wheel-carriages making the attempt, it was scarcely passable by horses. It was therefore concluded to send forwards, on the following day, three or four Hottentots with presents, and to proceed from the place of encampment on horseback.—Though the distance from the Keiskamma to the residence of the king was not more than fifteen

miles, it took us above four hours in riding. The hills were mostly covered with thick underwood, and on the plains were so many straggling trees of the thorny mimosa, just distant enough from each other for their spreading branches to meet and annoy passengers, that we were obliged to quit the direct road, which was no more than a foot-path, every moment. In the course of the journey we passed a number of villages containing from ten to thirty huts each, some of which were deserted, but others were very populous. A great crowd of people of all descriptions flocked down on every side and followed us along the road. The weather being warm, the men had thrown aside their cloaks and were entirely naked. But the women reserved their cloaks of calf-skin and close leather caps, which, with the heat of the weather, and their exertion to gratify their curiosity by the sight of the strangers, seemed to incommode them not a little.

On arriving at his place of residence, we found that the king, not having expected us until the following day, had gone to his grazing village, ten or twelve miles to the northward, in consequence of some intelligence he had received of the wolves having committed great depredations among his young cattle on the preceding night. A messenger was therefore immediately dispatched after him; and in the meantime the king's mother, a well looking woman apparently about five-and-thirty, and his queen, a very pretty Kaffer girl, about fifteen, with their female attendants, to the number of fifty or sixty, formed a circle round us, and endeavoured to entertain us with their good-humoured and lively conversation. It was not long before Gaika, the king, made his appearance riding on an ox in full gallop, attended by five or six of his people. Our business com-

menced with little ceremony under the shade of a spreading mimosa. He requested that we might all be seated in a circle on the ground, not as any mark of civility, but that it might the more distinctly be heard what each party had to say. The manner, however, in which he received us sufficiently marked the pleasure he derived from the visit: of the nature of this he was already aware, and entered immediately upon the subject, by expressing the satisfaction he felt in having an opportunity of explaining to us that none of the Kaffers who had passed the boundary established between the two nations were to be considered as his subjects: he said they were chiefs as well as himself, and entirely independent of him; but that his ancestors had always held the first rank, and their supremacy had been acknowledged on all occasions by the colonists: that all those Kaffers and their chiefs, who had at any time been desirous to enter under the protection of his family, had been kindly received; and that those who chose rather to remain independent had been permited to do so, without being considered in the light of enemies. He then informed us, that his father died, and left him, when very young, under the guardianship of Zambie, one of his first chiefs and own brother, who had acted as regent during his minority; but that having refused to resign to him his right on coming at years of discretion, his father's friends had showed themselves in his favour, and that by their assistance he had obliged his uncle to fly: that this man had then joined *Khouta*, a powerful chief to the northward, and with their united forces had made war against him: that he had been victorious, and had taken Zambie prisoner: that he had never been at war with, nor to his knowledge had ever given the slightest of-

fence to, the chiefs of the other side of the Keiskamma, but, on the contrary, had always endeavoured to conciliate their good-will: that since his friends and subjects had supported him in the assumption and maintenance of his right, he had observed a disposition in those chiefs to withdraw themselves from his friendship: that the people of Maloo and Tooley particularly had committed great depredations on the cattle of his subjects: and that, when he sent to them a civil message to inquire if any had by chance strayed into their territories, to his great surprise he was informed they had quitted the country: that he had more than once, since that period, sent to them his proffers of friendship, but that they had detained, and, as he supposed, put to death his messengers: that still to avoid giving them any pretext for commencing hostilities, he had strictly forbid any of his subjects to molest their habitations, or even to pass the Keiskamma.

Astonished to find so much good sense and prudence in a very young man and a Kaffer, we explained the nature of our visit to him, and submitted for his consideration the six following articles:

1. That he should send a messenger of peace and friendship along with one of our interpreters to the Kaffer chiefs now residing in the colony:

2. That none of his subjects, on any pretence whatever, unless sent expressly by him, should pass the boundary established between the Colonists and Kaffers:

3. That none of his subjects should have any intercourse whatever with the Colonists; and

that, if any of the latter should be found in any part of his territories, he would send them under a strong guard to Graaff Reynet:

4. That should any ship be stranded on the Kaffer coast, he would afford to the unfortunate passengers and crew hospitality and protection, and that he would conduct them in safety to Graaff Reynet:

5. That any Blacks, Hottentots, or *Bastaards*, found in his territories, should be taken and sent to Graaff Reynet:

6. And that he should keep up a friendly intercourse with the landrost, by sending annually, or oftener, if necessary, one of his captains, bearing a brass gorget, with the arms of his Britannic Majesty engraven upon it.

To all these he readily agreed, except to the latter part of the third article, observing, that he did not think it right for Kaffers to make prisoners of men so superior to themselves as Christians were; but he promised to give intelligence to the landrost, should any be met with in his territories. It is a common idea, industriously kept up in the colony, that the Kaffers are a savage, treacherous, and cruel people; a character as false as it is unmerited.—Their moderation towards the colonists, and all white people, has shown itself on many occasions; and if the inhabitants of the bordering parts of the colony had any sense of honour or feelings of gratitude, instead of assisting to propagate, they would endeavour to suppress, such an idea. They know very well that in the height of a war into which this people was iniquitously driven, the lives of all

their women and children that fell into the hands of the Kaffers were spared by them, whilst their own fell promiscuously by the hands of the colonists.—Another instance of the different manner in which the Dutch and the Kaffers conducted themselves, under the same circumstances, will serve to show which of the two nations most deserves the character thrown upon the latter.

In the month of February 1796, a vessel from India under Genoese colours, was wrecked on the coast of the colony between the Bosjesman and Sunday rivers. The peasantry from various parts of the coast, from Langé-kloof to Kaffer-land, flocked down to the wreck, not for the humane purpose of giving assistance to the unfortunate sufferers, but to plunder them of every thing that could be got on shore; and it is a notorious fact, that the only man who was anxious to secure some property for the captain and officers, had his brains dashed out with an iron bolt by one of his neighbours.

In June 1797, the Hercules, an American ship, was stranded between the mouths of the Keiskamma and the Beeka. By the time that the crew, consisting of about sixty persons, had got on shore, they found themselves surrounded by Kaffers, and expected immediately to have been put to death by these savages. Instead of which, to their no small degree of joy and surprise, a chief gave orders for an ox to be instantly killed, and the flesh distributed among the unfortunate sufferers. There is, however, one temptation which a Kaffer cannot resist—the sight of metal buttons; and those who suffered shipwreck, and who happened to have any of these articles about their persons, had them cut off without much ceremony. They were deprived of no

other part of their property; and they were conducted in safety to the residence of some of the colonists, from whom a demand was made of five rixdollars for the captain, and an equal sum for the whole of the crew, as a full compensation for their trouble—a very moderate and just demand; and it were to be wished that the example of the Kaffers was observed on some more civilized coasts.

Having arranged the business that brought us into Kaffer-land with the king, we made him a present consisting of sheets of copper, brass-wire, glass-beads, knives for skinning animals, looking-glasses, flints, steels, and tinder-boxes, and a quantity of tobacco. His mother also received a present of the same nature. Except this lady, all the other women kept in the back-ground during the conversation, as did also *Zambie*, the uncle and usurper, who was then a prisoner at large in the village. The young king's treatment of this man did him great honour. All his former attendants, his cattle, and his six wives, were restored to him, with as much liberty as the rest of his subjects, except that he was always obliged to be in the same village with the king.

Gaika was a young man, at this time under twenty years of age, of an elegant form, and a graceful and manly deportment; his height about five feet ten inches; his face of a deep bronze colour, approaching nearly to black; his skin soft and smooth; his eyes dark brown, and full of animation; his teeth regular, well-set, and white as the purest ivory: his countenance open, but more marked with the habit of reflection than is usually observed in that of a Kaffer; he had the appearance, indeed, of possessing in an eminent degree a solid understanding and a clear head; to every question

that related to their manners, customs, laws, and various other points, he gave, without embarrassment or reserve, direct and unequivocal answers; and it is to him I am principally indebted for the little information I am enabled to give concerning the Kaffer nation: his understanding was not more strong than his disposition appeared to be amiable: he seemed to be the adored object of his subjects; the name of Gaika was in every mouth, and it was seldom pronounced without symptoms of joy. He had one wife only, very young, and, setting aside the prejudice against colour, very pretty, by whom he had a little girl called *Jasa*. Like the chiefs in the colony he wore a brass chain suspended, on the left side, from a wreath of copper beads that encircled his head: on his arm he had five large rings cut out of the solid tusks of elephants, and round his neck was a chain of beads: his cloak was faced with skins of leopards; but he threw this dress aside, and, like the rest of his people, appeared entirely naked.

The queen had nothing to distinguish her from the other women, except that her cloak seemed to have had more pains bestowed upon it in the dressing, and had three rows behind of brass buttons extending from the hood to the bottom of the skirts, and so close that they touched each other. The rest of the women were contented with a few of these straggling over different parts of the cloak. This weighty covering is never laid aside in the hottest weather; but they wear nothing whatsoever under it, except the little apron that the Hottentot women take such pains to decorate. The Kaffer ladies are not less anxious to appear smart about the head.—Their skin-caps were ornamented with buttons, buckles, beads, or shells, according as fancy might suggest, or their wardrobe could supply.

Though the country between the Keiskamma and the residence of the king had been rugged, poor, and mountainous, it here began to assume a very different appearance. The knolls of grass were thickly covered, and the hanging woods on the steep sides of the high mountains to the northward were extremely beautiful. The village, it seemed, at which he now lived, was but a temporary residence. It was situated upon the *Kooquanie*, a small stream that fell into the *Keiskamma;* it consisted of about forty or fifty huts of the form of bee-hives. That which seemed to be destined for the use of the queen, stood at the head of the village; was somewhat larger than the rest, and finished in a neater manner: it was about ten feet in diameter, and eight feet high. They are first shaped by frames of wood, and afterwards daubed over with a kind of mortar composed of clay and the dung of cattle; and, when this is sufficiently dry, a neat covering of matting is worked over the whole. Such huts are completely water-tight, and very warm.

The Kaffers having always been represented as agriculturists, we were a little disappointed in not meeting with gardens and cultivated grounds about their habitations, not a vestige of which had any where appeared. On putting the question to *Gaika*, he replied, that having been engaged in war for the two or three years last past, during which he had not been able to fix at any one place above a month or two at a time, they had consequently been under the necessity of suspending their pursuits of agriculture: that in time of peace they always planted millet, and several kinds of vegetables; and that nothing could give him an equal degree of pleasure to that of seeing the *keerie*, now an instrument of war, converted into an utensil of husbandry; but

that at present he was just on the eve of another campaign. He seemed much pleased when the landrost told him, that if, on his return from his expedition, he would send to Graaff Reynet, he should be supplied with corn and different garden-seeds; and he appeared to anticipate the happiness that his people would experience, after the fatigues and horrors of war, in returning to their ancient habits of peaceful industry.

The country inhabited by the people whom the colonists distinguish by the name of Kaffers, is bounded on the south by the sea-coast; on the east, by a tribe of the same kind of people who call themselves *Tambookies;* on the north, by the savage Bosjesmans; and on the west, by the colony of the Cape. With the Tambookies they live on friendly terms; but, like the Dutch peasantry, they have declared perpetual war against the Bosjesmans. Their expeditions, however, against these savages, are not attended with the same success as those of the colonists.—The Bosjesmans care as little for a hassagai as they dread a musket. The principal weapon used by the Kaffers is an iron spear from nine inches to a foot in length, fixed at the end of a tapering shaft about four feet long. Such an instrument is called by the Hottentots a hassagai, but the Kaffer name is omkontoo. In throwing this spear they grasp it with the palm of the hand, and raising the arm above the head, and giving the shaft a quivering motion to find the proper point of equilibrium, it is delivered with the fore-finger and the thumb. At the distance of fifty or sixty paces they can throw at a mark with a tolerable degree of exactness; but beyond that distance they have no kind of certainty. It appears to be a very indifferent sort of weapon, and easily to be avoided. In battle they receive the

point of the hassagai upon an oval shield about four feet in depth, made from the hide of a bullock.—Their other weapon, the *keerie*, is less formidable than the hassagai: this is a stick about two feet and a half long, with a round knob at the end about two inches in diameter, and very weighty, being the root of some shrub. They throw it in the same manner as the hassagai, and are very expert in killing birds and the smaller sort of antelopes, particularly the little *pygmæa*. The small end of the *keerie* serves, in time of peace, in their agriculture, as an instrument for dibbling, for which purpose it seems to be much better adapted than for a hostile weapon. The government on the east side of the Keiskamma is not exactly the same as on the west. Gaika is the acknowledged sovereign over that part of the country which lies to the eastward of the river. The few chiefs who live among his people are obedient to his commands, and consider themselves as his captains. Among the emigrant Kaffers, each chief is independent, though the inferior ones look up, in some measure, to those who are more powerful than themselves. These detached hordes seem in their government to resemble the ancient clans of the Highlands of Scotland.

Every Kaffer is a soldier and a tradesman. The first is not a profession, but taken up occasionally as the state, of which he is a member, may demand his services. War is not made by them for extension of territory or individual aggrandizement, but for some direct insult or act of injustice against the whole, or some member of the community. His habits and way of life are better suited for the herdsman than for the warrior. From the nature of his food, which is chiefly milk, his manners are mild and gentle, at the same time that the exercise of the

chase, which from pleasure he follows as well as for profit, gives him an erect deportment, and a boldness and openness of expression that indicate nothing like fear. This in fact is a passion of the mind which can hardly be said to exist in that of a Kaffer. In time of peace, he leads the true pastoral life: his cattle is his only care: he rarely kills one for his own consumption, except on some particular occasion. When a stranger of distinction visits a Kaffer chief, he selects from his herd the fattest ox, and divides it with his visitors. The evening that we departed from the village of the king, curiosity had brought together about a thousand people to see the strangers. Before they returned to their houses the king ordered four oxen to be slain, and the flesh to be distributed among them. For our party he intended a present of three oxen; but these he observed must be selected from his herd with his own hands. The whole management of the cattle is left to the men, and they easily render them uncommonly expert in comprehending their meaning. The horns of their greatest favourites are twisted in their nascent state into very whimsical forms. These are effected by grasping the young horn with hot irons till it becomes soft, in which state the direction wished for is given to it. Those of the ox on which the king rode were laid along each side of the neck with the points just touching the shoulders.

Among their cattle was a particular breed different from any I had seen in the colony. They were short-legged, short necked, generally of a black and white colour, and their horns were only from four to eight inches in length, curved inwards; and their extremities, which were nearly of the same thickness at the roots, pointed to the ears. These horns had no connection with the skull, but were attached

merely to the skin, and so loose that they might be turned round in any direction. Extended to their greatest length, they strike against the animal's face when walking. They were considered as excellent beasts for riding or for bearing burthens. This variety of the common ox had not the dorsal tuft which the loose-horned ox of Abyssinia is described to possess.

While the men are employed in rearing and attending the cattle, the women are engaged in the affairs of the house, and in cultivating the ground. These, with the manufacture of baskets with the Cyperus grass, and of earthern pots for boiling their meat or corn, which are the chief part of their household utensils, the making their skin-cloaks, and nursing their children, furnish sufficient employment for the women. They are said to be exceedingly prolific; that twins are almost as frequent as single births, and that it is no uncommon thing for a woman to have three at a time. Their children, soon after birth, are suffered to crawl about perfectly naked; and at six or seven months they are able to run. A cripple or deformed person is never seen. The Dutch have an idea that if a Kaffer child should be born imperfect, the parents immediately strangle it. *Gaika*'s mother seemed shocked at such a question being put to her; and assured me that a woman who could suffer such an unnatural crime to be committed, would be chased out of society. A high degree of civilization may indeed dull the feelings of nature, and policy may sometimes silently approve of crimes committed against it; but a savage feels the full force of parental affection.

There is perhaps no nation on earth, taken collectively, that can produce so fine a race of men as

the Kaffers: they are tall, stout, muscular, well made, elegant figures. They are exempt, indeed, from many of those causes that, in more civilized societies, contribute to impede the growth of the body. Their diet is simple; their exercise of a salutary nature; their body is neither cramped nor encumbered by clothing; the air they breathe is pure; their rest is not disturbed by violent love, nor their minds ruffled by jealousy; they are free from those licentious appetites which proceed frequently more from a depraved imagination than a real natural want: their frame is neither shaken nor enervated by the use of intoxicating liquors, which they are not acquainted with; they eat when hungry, and sleep when nature demands it. With such a kind of life, languor and melancholy have little to do. The countenance of a Kaffer is always cheerful; and the whole of his demeanour bespeaks content and peace of mind.

Though black, or very nearly so, they have not one line of the African negro in the composition of their persons. The comparative anatomist might be a little perplexed in placing the skull of a Kaffer in the chain, so ingeniously put together by him, comprehending all the links from the most perfect European to the Ourang-Outang, and thence through all the monkey-tribe. The head of a Kaffer is not elongated: the frontal and the occipital bones form nearly a semicircle; and a line from the forehead to the chin drawn over the nose is convex like that of most Europeans. In short, had not Nature bestowed upon him the dark-colouring principle that anatomists have discovered to be owing to a certain gelatinous fluid lying between the epidermis and the cuticle, he might have ranked among the first of Europeans.

Among other things that may have contributed to have kept up the tall athletic stature of these people, is their frequent intermarriages with strangers. The principal article of their trade with the Tambookie nation is the exchange of cattle for their young women. Almost every chief has Tambookie wives, though they pay much dearer for them than for those of their own people. Polygamy is allowed, without any inconvenience resulting from the practice, as it is confined almost to the chiefs. The circumstances of the common people will rarely allow them the indulgence of more than one wife, as no woman is to be obtained without purchase. The females being considered as the property of their parents, are always disposed of by sale. The common price of a wife is an ox or a couple of cows. Love with them is a very confined passion, taking but little hold on the mind. When an offer is made for the purchase of a daughter, she feels little inclination to refuse; she considers herself as an article at market, and is neither surprised, nor unhappy, nor interested, on being told that she is about to be disposed of. There is no previous courtship, no exchange of fine sentiments, no nice feelings, nor attentions to catch the affections, and to attach the heart. It would be unjust at the same time to tax them with sensuality. A Kaffer woman is chaste and extremely modest; yet, in many points of conduct, in which she differs from females of more polished nations, the latter part of her character might be called in question. If, for instance, a young woman be asked whether she be married, not content with giving the simple negative, she throws open her cloak and displays her bosom; and, as most frequently she has no other covering beneath, she perhaps may discover at the same time, though unintentionally, more of her charms.

Instances of infidelity are very rare; and, when they do occur, are accidental rather than premeditated. The punishment is a fine, and, if the man chooses it, dismissal of his wife; but should a husband surprise his wife in the act of adultery, the law would justify him in putting the parties to death. Their laws in general appear to be very simple, and grounded less on policy than on natural principles. If a murder should appear to be premeditated, the perpetrator is instantly put to death. If a man should kill another in his own defence, in a quarrel, or by accident, he must pay to the relations of the deceased, as a compensation for their loss, a certain fine, which is either agreed to among themselves, or settled by the chief and elders of the horde. In doing this, the value that the deceased bore in the society, is taken only into consideration. A chief has no power over the lives of his subjects: should he by design, or in the heat of passion, put a man to death, he would incur the hazard of being expelled by the community. For theft there is no other punishment than that of restitution. They know nothing of the practice of imprisonment for any crime.

The ancients were of opinion, that the face was always the index of the mind. Modern physiognomists have gone a step farther, and say, that a fine form, perfect in all its parts, cannot contain a crooked or an imperfect mind. Judging the mind of a Kaffer by such a rule, it could not be pronounced deficient in talent. The experiment of giving him a suitable education, has not yet been made; but there are perhaps no unlettered people on the face of the earth, whose manners and opinions have more the appearance of civilization than those of the Kaffers: they are no contemptible artisans. Though

they have no knowledge of smelting iron from the ore, yet when it comes to their hands in a malleable state, they can shape it to their purpose with wonderful dexterity. Every man is his own artist. A piece of stone serves for his hammer, and another for the anvil, and with these alone he will finish a spear, or a chain, or a metallic bead that would not disgrace the town of Birmingham. The shafts of their spears are also neatly made. Many of the ornaments of copper and iron, with which they adorn their heads, are far from being void of taste. The article that furnishes their dress, is prepared and put together with some degree of ingenuity. Calves' skins only are used for this purpose: when taken from the animal, they are fixed to the ground with wooden pegs, extended as far as they will bear, and well scraped, so that no part of the flesh remains upon them. As soon as they are sufficiently dry to have lost the power of contraction, they are beaten with stones till they become soft and pliant. In this state the interior side is scraped with sharp stones, and smeared with red ochre, till a nap, like that on cloth, is raised over the whole surface: they are then cut into proper shapes, and sewed together exactly in the same manner that the shoemakers of Europe stitch together two pieces of leather. Their bodkin is a piece of polished iron, and the thread is the fibres of the tendons of the long dorsal muscle taken from various animals; those in a wild state are preferred, as furnishing a much stronger thread than such as are domesticated. The Hottentots sew together their sheep-skins with the same material; and the colonists, following the example of the natives, have recourse to the same article as a substitute for flaxen thread, which, when the English took possession of the settlement, bore an advance in price of a thousand *per cent.*

The progress of their agriculture, as observed by the king, has lately been checked by internal dissentions, and the encroachments of a rival power. They seem however to be much more inclined to the pastoral than the agricultural life,—a circumstance which will retard their advancement in civilization. The one finds leisure to sit down and reflect; the other is never stationary, but wandering from place to place in search of food for the cattle. The chase employs the greatest portion of the time they have to spare. In the Kaffer country the larger sort of game, particularly the elephant and the buffalo, are become very scarce; and not an ostrich nor a springbok is now to be found there. These two animals, keeping generally upon the plains, and avoiding the woods, were easily inclosed by the numerous hunting parties, and destroyed. The elephant and the buffalo fell also in the woods by the hassagai, but more frequently by deep pits made in the ground across the paths that led to their usual haunts. In this manner they sometimes took the hippopotamus; but the usual gait of this animal, when not disturbed, is so cautious and slow that he generally smelt the snare that was laid for him, and avoided it. The more certain method of destroying him was to watch at night behind a bush close to his path; and, as he passed, to wound him in the tendons of the knee-joint, by which he was immediately rendered lame and unable to escape from the numerous hassagais that afterwards assailed him. Numbers of this huge animal still remain in all their large rivers; indeed they seem not very solicitous about destroying it. The tusks, though of the finest ivory, are too small for the usual purposes to which they apply this article; and they seem to have less relish for grease than either the Hottentots or the colonists. The spoils of the chase

are always bestowed upon their persons. The tusks of the elephant furnish them with ivory rings for the arm; the leopard supplies his skin to ornament the front of the cloak; and the skin of the tiger-cat is used by the women as pocket-handkerchiefs.

Besides the illicit trade that the Dutch farmers have carried on with this people, consisting of pieces of iron, copper, glass-beads, and a few other trifling articles, given to them in exchange for their cattle, the Kaffers have no kind of commerce with any other nation except their eastern neighbours the Tambookies. In addition to the young girls which they purchase from these people, they are supplied by them with a small quantity of iron in exchange for cattle. It has been supposed that the Tambookies, and other nations farther to the eastward, possessed the art of obtaining iron from the ore; but it is much more probable that they are supplied with it by the Portugueze settlers of Rio de la Goa, not far from which their country is situated. The only metals known to the Kaffers are iron and copper; and their only medium of exchange, and the only article of commerce they possess, is their cattle.

There are perhaps few nations, besides the Kaffers, that have not contrived to draw some advantages from the possession of a sea-coast. They have no kind of fishery whatsoever either with nets or boats. Whether they retain any remains of superstition attached to some of the various modifications through which the Mahometan, as well as the Christian, religion has undergone in its progress through different countries, that forbids them the use of fish; or whether their way of life has hitherto prevented them from thinking on the means of obtaining a livelihood from the waters, I cannot pre-

tend to say; but they scarcely know what kind of a creature a fish is. The whole extent of their coast, that is washed by the sea and intersected by the mouths of several large rivers, does not produce a single boat, nor canoe, nor any thing that resembles a floating vessel. The short space of time, perhaps, which they have occupied that part of Africa they now inhabit, has not yet sufficiently familiarized them to the nature of deep waters, to entrust themselves upon a frail bark.

" Illi robur et æs triplex
" Circa pectus erat, qui fragilem truci
" Commisit pelago ratem
" Primus"———

The Kaffers most certainly are not the Aborigines of the southern angle of Africa. Surrounded on all sides by people that differ from them in every point, in colour, in features, in form, in disposition, in manners, and in language, it would be absurd to consider them as indigenous to the small spot they now possess. To speculate upon their origin, it might not perhaps be far from the mark to suppose them to have sprung from some of the tribes of those wandering Arabs known by the name of *Beduins*.— These people are known to have penetrated into almost every part of Africa. Much of the Arab features are visible in the countenance of a Kaffer; and there is a strong resemblance in his way of life, his pastoral habits, his character, and treatment of strangers that may want his protection. Colonies of these people have found their way even to the islands of South Africa, where more difficulties would occur than in a journey over land to the Cape of Good Hope. By skirting the Red Sea, and turning to the southward along the sea-coast, the great desert of sand that divides Africa into two parts is

entirely avoided, and the passage lies over a country habitable as far as is known in every part.

Circumcision of male children, that grand feature of Islamism, is universally practised among the Kaffers, and is the only exterior mark that seems to remain of a religious or sacred institution. He considers it, however, in the limited point of view of a duty owing to the memory of his ancestors, a prescriptive custom handed down to him as an example he is bound to follow. He neither ascribes the practice of it to a principle of cleanliness, nor to any other cause or motive, but contents himself by pleading ancient usage. A circumcisor is a profession, and I believe the only one that exists among the Kaffers. The time of performing the operation is generally at the age of eight or nine years. The people who follow the profession, travel from village to village, cutting all the male children who may be of a proper age. During the time he remains in a village, which may be eight or ten days, to see that his patients are doing well, he is feasted from house to house.

To perform the operation of circumcision, nothing more is necessary than a sharp piece of iron in the form of the blade of a knife. The point of this is inserted between the glans and the prepuce on the upper part, and the skin laid open to the root where they unite; from thence the instrument is passed down each side to the frœnum, close along the edge of which the whole prepuce is removed in two parts. After the operation, the boy adopts a small bag of leather, which extends a little beyond the glans penis, and fits sufficiently tight to remain on without binding, though some wear a belt, to which the covering is attached by a string. The projecting

end of the purse has a small shank about an inch in length, by which it may more conveniently be drawn off: this, with the rings, and beads, and other ornaments, constitutes the whole of a Kaffer's summer dress. He wears nothing on his head, which is naturally covered with the same kind of curling hair as that of the Hottentot. This circumstance of short hair should seem to operate against the supposition of their Arabic origin; but their intermixture with the Hottentots and other neighbouring nations along the coast, would very speedily have produced it; and when a twist is once got into the hair, in a warm climate, it seems to increase with every generation. The *Bastaards* here, produced between an European and a Hottentot, have strong curling hair, and are, except in colour, very like the Kaffers.

So different are the opinions and the feelings of different nations concerning religion, and so difficult do the most civilized people find it to express their notions clearly and consistently of the "unknown "God," that little satisfactory information can be collected on those points without a very familiar and extensive knowledge of the language of the people among whom the inquiry is made, which was far from being the case in the present instance. The king being asked if they had any belief in a supernatural power, and, if so, what were their notions concerning it? replied, that they believed in the existence of some invisible power, that sometimes brought good and sometimes evil upon them; it was this power that caused men to die suddenly, or before they arrived at years of maturity; that raised the wind, and made thunder and lightning to frighten, and sometimes kill them; that led the sun across the world in the day, and the moon by night;

and that made all those things which they could not understand nor imitate. I then showed him my watch; and from his great surprise, it was clear he had never seen one before. On examining attentively the movements, and observing that the motion was continued in his own hands, he looked at the surrounding spectators, and pronounced the word *feegas*, which was echoed back with a nod of the head from the whole crowd. Concerning this word the Hottentot interpreter could get no other information, than that it was some influence of the dead over the living in instigating and directing the actions of the latter. He called it a ghost or spirit, and said it was the Kaffer way of swearing. It appeared that if a Kaffer swore by a deceased relation, his oath was considered as inviolable. A promise was always held sacred when a piece of metal was broken between the parties; a practice not unlike the breaking of a six-pence between two parting lovers, still kept up in some country-places of England. That these people have not bewildered their imaginations so far with metaphysical ideas of the immortality of the soul, as the more civilized part of mankind have given into, and that their notions have been little directed towards a future state of existence, was clear from his replies to various questions put to him on that subject. As little information was likely to be gained on such abstruse points through the medium of a Hottentot interpreter, the conversation was turned to other subjects less embarrassing, and such as came more immediately before the senses.

Their skill in music is not above the level of that of the Hottentots. They have in fact no other instruments except the two in use among the latter, and a small whistle made of the bone of some ani-

mal, and used sometimes for giving orders to their cattle when at a distance. They seldom attempt to sing or to dance, and their performances of both are miserably bad. A Kaffer woman is only serious when she dances, and at such times her eyes are constantly fixed on the ground, and her whole body seems to be thrown into convulsive motions.

A greater degree of amusement seems to be derived by the women from the practice of *tatooing*, or marking the body by raising the epidermis from the cuticle; a custom that has been found to exist among most of the uncivilized nations inhabiting warm countries, and which probably owes its origin to a total want of mental resources, and of the employment of time. By slightly irritating, it conveys to the body pleasurable sensations. In Kaffer-land it has passed into a general fashion. No woman is without a tatooed skin; and their ingenuity is chiefly exercised between the breasts and on the arms.

The temperate manner of living among these people, their simple diet and their duly-proportioned quantity of exercise, subject them to few complaints. A limited number of simples compose the dispensary of all nations where physic is not a profession. The Kaffers make use of very few plants, and these chiefly in embrocations for sprains and bruises. The mother of Gaika was so solicitous to procure from us a quantity of common salt, to be applied as a purgative, that she sent a person to our waggons, fifteen miles distant, for it. They are not subject to any cutaneous diseases. The small-pox was once brought among them by a vessel that was stranded on their coast, and carried off great numbers. The marks of this disorder were apparent on the faces of many of the elder people. They have no fer-

mented nor distilled liquors to impair the constitution. The only two intoxicating articles of which they have any knowledge, are tobacco and hemp. The effects produced from smoking the latter, are said to be fully as narcotic as those of opium. In the use of this and of tobacco, the oriental custom of drawing the smoke through water by means of the hookar, though in a rude manner, is still retained. The bowl of their earthen-ware pipe is attached to the end of a thick reed, which stands obliquely fixed into the side of an eland's horn. This horn being filled with water, the mouth is applied to the opposite end to that near which the reed is fixed. The Hottentot differs very materially from the Kaffer in the construction of *his* pipe. He reduces the stem to the length of two inches, that two senses may at the same time receive the benefit and the gratification resulting from the practice of smoking.

Few are the dietetic plants cultivated by the Kaffers. The millet, called by botanists the *holcus sorghum*, and a very large species of water-melon, seem to be their principal culinary plants. The *zamia cycadis*, a species of palm, grows wild in almost every part of the country, and is sometimes used, as a substitute for millet, to mix with milk as a kind of furmety. For this purpose the pith of the thick stem is buried in the ground for a month or five weeks, till it becomes soft and short, so as easily to be reduced to a pulpy consistence. They eat also the roots of the *iris edulis*, and several kinds of wild berries, and leguminous plants.

Had the Kaffers been more generally employed in tilling the ground, they had probably before this arrived at a more competent knowledge of the general causes by which the vicissitudes of the seasons

are produced. At present they know little more of astronomy than that in about thirty days the moon will have gone through all its different phases; and that in about twelve moons the same seasons will return. Their only chronology is kept by the moon, and is registered by notches in pieces of wood. It seldom extends beyond one generation till the old series is cancelled, and some great event, as the death of a favourite chief, or the gaining of a victory, serves for a new æra.

Not the smallest vestige of a written character is to be traced among them; but their language appears to be the remains of something far beyond that of any savage nation. In the enunciation it is soft, fluent, and harmonious; has neither the monotonous mouthing of the savage, nor the nasal nor guttural sounds that prevail in almost all the European tongues. It is as different from that of the Hottentots as the latter is from the English. In a very few words, and these are generally proper names, they have adopted the palatial clacking of the tongue used by the Hottentots. The mountains and rivers in the country, for instance, still retain their Hottentot names; a presumptive proof that the Kaffers were intruders upon this nation. It is singular enough that the Kaffers, as well as the Hottentots, should have obtained a name that never belonged to them. The word Kaffer could not be pronounced by one of that nation. They have no sound of the letter R in their language. A *Koffray*, among the Indians, is an infidel, a pagan, and was a general name applied by the early voyagers to those people, in whom they did not perceive any traits of a religious nature; but the origin of the name of Hottentot seems not yet to have been ascertained.—The Kaffers call themselves *Koussie*, which word is

pronounced by the Hottentots with a strong palatial stroke of the tongue on the first syllable. I know not if the Kaffer language bears any analogy to the Arabic; but their word *eliang* for the sun has an oriental sound for expressing the same idea. The following brief specimen of the Kaffer language, with the synonimous words in that of the Hottentots', may serve to show how little resemblance they bear to each other. The hyphen, in the latter, expresses the dental, and the circumflex the palatial, action of the tongue on those syllables over which they are placed.

	KAFFER.	HOTTENTOT.
The sun,	Eliang,	Surrie.
The moon,	Inyango,	kā.
The stars,	Imquemqueis,	Kōro.
The earth,	Umclabo,	Kŏo.
Air or light,	Amaphoo,	Kōm.
Fire,	Leaw,	Ei.
Water,	Amaanzee,	Kām.
Thunder,	Ezoolo,	hōōnoo.
Lightning,	Leaw Ezoolo,	hōōnoo-ei.
Wind,	Oomoi,	qūa.
Rain,	Imphoola,	Tōōkai.
The sea,	Ooloanje,	hurroo.
A man,	Abaantoo,	Quaina.
A woman,	Omfaas,	Quaisha.
An ox,	Incabai,	Mnoo.
A dog,	Eenja,	Toona.
To-day,	Emenie,	Hasai.
To-morrow,	Gamtzo,	Quātrie.
One,	Eenyé,	Qūæ.
Two,	Zimbeenie,	Kăm.
Three,	Zintaté,	gŏna.
Four,	Zeené,	haka.

	KAFFER.	HOTTENTOT.
Five,	Zincano,	gosé.
Six,	Zintantaat.	
Seven,	Zinnoné.	
Eight,	Zintoamnayené.	
Nine,	Tuamnumyé.	
Ten,	Leeshung.	
Eleven,	Leefang-gay-yé.	
Twelve,	Leefangbeenie.	
Twenty,	Amashoomomabeenie.	
Thirty,	Amashoomomataté.	
Forty,	Amashoomomazeené.	
A hundred,	Ecoloo.	

The Kaffers differ also very materially from all the neighbouring nations in their manner of disposing of the dead. Funeral rites are bestowed only on the bodies of their chiefs, and on their children. The first are generally interred very deep in the kraals or places where their own oxen used to stand at nights; and the bodies of infants are most commonly deposited in the ant-hills that have been excavated by the myrmecophagæ or ant-eaters. The rest are exposed to be devoured by wolves. As these animals drag them away immediately into their dens, the relations of the deceased are in no danger of being shocked or disgusted with the sight of the mangled carcase. A Kaffer, in consideration of this piece of service, holds the life of a wolf sacred, at least he never endeavours to destroy it; the consequence of which is, that the country swarms with them. Some author has asserted, that the custom of burning the dead was universal, till the practice of it, adopted as the most prudent and convenient disposal of an unpleasant object, became a subject of ostentatious parade; and the funeral pile having at length exhausted the forests, necessity

obliged them to have recourse to other means, some to interment, others to exposure in high places to be devoured by crows and vultures. Had the Kaffers ever burned their dead in the country they now inhabit, they were under no necessity of discontinuing the practice for want of fuel, being in the midst of inexhaustible forests.

The business that had brought us to the Kaffer king being finished, our next step was to examine the mouth of the Keiskamma, the magnitude and strength of the stream being so much superior to those of the Great Fish river, seeming to promise a considerable opening at its union with the sea, there might, in all probability, be a bay or harbour. No part of the Kaffer coast has ever been surveyed, nor indeed visited, by any one who thought of placing it in a chart. Having, however, an untravelled and an uninhabited country to pass, in order to arrive at our object, most of the party thought fit to quit us, and to amuse themselves with shooting sea-cows in the Keiskamma, whilst we turned off to the southward towards the sea-coast. In the dusk of the evening we came to a small clear stream, upon the bank of which we pitched our tent. It intersected one of the most beautiful parts of Africa that had yet fallen under our observation. The bold eastern bank clothed with hanging-wood, and the extensive meadows rising gradually on the opposite side into fine swells covered with grass, and interrupted here and there by clumps of tall shrubbery and straggling trees, gave to the country the appearance of a suite of English parks or pleasure grounds. Along the river stood a number of small villages and detached huts; but they were entirely deserted. The land had evidently been under cultivation no long time past. Fields of millet that

had been consumed by the birds were still standing in regular rows. It appeared to be the *holcus sorghum* of Linnæus. Several large water-melons, of an insipid taste, had planted themselves from the seed of the old ones that had decayed on the ground. Several implements of husbandry, *keeries*, and small wooden spades, were lying in the gardens: and it appeared as if the inhabitants had been driven away in a hasty manner.

Some fires being seen at no great distance from the place of our encampment, and the dogs keeping a perpetual barking after it grew dark, we began to suspect that our motions were watched by one of the parties, the Kaffer king, or the emigrant chiefs. In the course of the night, however, the disturbance made by the dogs was explained, from an immense troop of wolves attracted by the smell of an ox that had been killed the preceding evening. These creatures came in such a body as completely to chase away the dogs, and to frighten all our people, though armed with muskets.

Besides the common wolf and the domestic dog, there are no fewer than five distinct species of the canine tribe in Southern Africa that have passed through my hands: three of these are called in the colony by the general name of jackal; one the *mesomelas*, an animal well known, and very common in every part of the Cape; another, the *aureus*, which is smaller than the first, goes generally in troops, and is commonly met with in the Sneuwberg: the third is a species of fox, as yet, I believe, not described; the colour is grizzled, the ground cinereous blue mixed with silvery hairs; face, legs, and belly light brown; tail straight, grizzled, and bushy; ears long, pointed, erect; face remarkably

pointed; the hair soft, and resembling fur; in stature it is considerably less than the common fox.—The other two go under the name of wolves; one is the *crocuta*, called the spotted wolf; the other is an enormous beast, and seldom met with except in the remote parts of the colony: its size is that of the largest Newfoundland dog; the colour a pale sallow; the hair of the neck and back long, thick, and clotted; tail short and straight; shoulders, thighs, and legs, marked with large irregular black blotches: from its having only four toes on the forefeet, it may probably be a variety of the common hyæna.

The smell of the carcase presently attracted a prodigious number of birds of prey, one of which, a small kite, entirely brown, with a forked tail, was so bold that it suffered itself to be knocked down with sticks. Just the reverse was the case with a beautiful small hawk nine inches long, of a chocolate brown, with a triangular black spot on each of the back feathers; exterior side of the wing feathers marked with semicircular ferruginous spots passing into white at the edges; tail barred with alternate black and cinereous blue stripes; beak and nails of a livid colour. A species of crow in vast numbers is generally found to attend birds of prey. It is uncommonly bold and ravenous, and all its habits are vulturine: the beak is stronger and more crooked than that of the raven, and the upper mandible is carinated. One sex has a white shield down the back only; the other both on the back and the breast. It is either a variety of the raven, or an undescribed species. Of other kinds of birds, there seemed to be few that are not commonly met with in most parts of the colony. Thrushes and turtle-doves were the most numerous. The former are

known in the colony under the general name of *sprew*. A description of the different thrushes of Africa would alone nearly fill a volume, though not more than thirty species appear to have been noticed, of which the *nitens*, reflecting every shade of azure, green, and purple, is the most elegant, and one of the best singers. The only curious and rare bird that I obtained in the Kaffer country was the *buceros Africanus*, the African hornbill.

In one day's journey from the Beeka we came to the mouth of the Keiskamma, near which the river was about the width of the Thames at Woolwich, still, and apparently of great depth; but the entrance was guarded by a bar of sand, upon which the surf broke with great violence. On each side of the mouth reefs of rocks ran out to a considerable distance; and the wild and rocky coast was without sinuosities as far as the eye could reach. The mouth of the Keiskamma was found by observation to be in 33° 12′ south latitude, and 28° 6′ east longitude.

The only kind of game that was met with near the sea-coast was the hartebeest, the riet-bok, and the ree-bok. Innumerable traces of hippopotami were visible along the bank of the river; but none of these animals made their appearance.

The weather being remarkably fine, butterflies and moths were flying about in the greatest abundance. Of the latter I noticed near fifty distinct species that, in one evening, came upon the table in the tent, attracted by the light of the candle.—Entomologists, employed in making a collection of the *phalænæ*, could not adopt a better plan than that of placing a tent with a light in it near the side

of a wood. Some of the *papiliones* were very brilliant; and there were, no doubt, among them many species that could not be matched even in Mr. Drury's extensive and valuable cabinet of foreign insects. I regretted the want of time and convenience to make a collection of the insects of the country.

Having re-crossed the Great Fish river, on our return we directed our course across a plain towards Graaff Reynet. On this plain was found, some years ago, upon the surface of the ground, a mass of pure iron in a malleable state. Considered as a great curiosity, it was carried from place to place, and is now in Cape Town. The mass was entirely amorphous; exhibited no appearance of having ever been in a mine; no matrix of any kind was adhering to it; nor in the cavities of its surface were any pebbles or marks of crystallization. It was exceedingly tough, and the fracture more like that of lead than of iron. The weight of the mass might be about three hundred pounds. A specimen of this iron being carried into England, some time ago, by Col. Prehn, it was supposed that this metal was to be met with in its native state at the Cape of Good Hope. Mineralogists, however, are still in doubt whether iron, though the most abundant of all metals, has yet been discovered in a native state; and whether those masses that have been found in Siberia, in Senegal, and a few other places, were not the products of art, which, on some occasion, or by accident, had been buried in the ground. The mass in question exhibited evident marks of force having been used in order to flatten and to draw it out. It had probably been the thick part of a ship's anchor, carried from the coast to the place where it was found by the Kaffers, and attempted by them to be reduced into smaller pieces.

Travelling along the feet of the *Rietberg* before mentioned, on the northern side, we passed several fine clumps of forest-trees in the kloofs of the mountain, and among these obtained three new species of timber foreign to the woods near Zwart Kop's bay. The face of the country was here particularly rugged ; the hills were composed of sand-stone, resting on bases of blue slate. In the perpendicular side of one of these was oozing out a salt of various colours, similar to that described and found near the salt lake of Zwart Kop's river. The upper part of the face of this hill consisted of large, regular, rhomboidal tablets, whose projecting angles formed a kind of cornice to the face : these rested on a mass of purple slate, crumbling into dust. The white veins of quartz that appeared to have once been liquid, and to have flowed through the slate in curved seams, were now far advanced in their transitions into clay ; pieces of these veins were friable between the fingers ; several prismatic quartz crystals were found in a corroded state, and evidently decomposing into the same earth. The changes of quartz into clay are perceptible in all the mountains of Southern Africa. It should seem that this is the last stage of all the earthly bodies. Future discoveries in chemistry may perhaps demonstrate that the earths, now considered as having different bases, were originally formed of one, and are reducible to the same ultimate principle ; or that they are convertible substances. That exposure to, and combination with, the different airs that float in the atmosphere, or with water impregnated by different materials, they become subject to pass into the nature of each other.

Several detached pieces of hematite were found among the mass of slate. Indeed there is scarcely a mountain in Africa that does not produce iron

ores; and ochres are every where found in the greatest abundance. The finest of these are met with in the state of impalpable powders inclosed in crustaceous coverings of a reddish colour, of the hardness and consistence of baked earthen-ware, sometimes in single nodules of an inch or two inches diameter, but more frequently in clusters of two, three, or four nodules, connected by necks which are also hollow. In these stones every shade of colour is said to have been found, except the greens; but the most common are those of a pale yellow and chocolate brown. The country people know them by the name of *paint-stones*, because the powders they contain, when mixed up with oil, make very good paint, without any sifting or further preparation.

On the upper part of the Bosjesman's river we received a visit from the chief of the Ghonaquas, followed by the last remains of this mixed tribe of Kaffer and Hottentot, consisting of about a dozen people. The prediction of Vaillant concerning this horde has turned out but too true. The name of Ghonaqua, like those of the numerous tribes of Hottentots now extinct, is just on the eve of oblivion. Driven out of their ancient possessions in the Zuure Veldt by the colonists, they yet found an asylum from the father of Gaika, in one of the most fertile districts of his kingdom, watered by the river *Kaapna:* here they were suffered to remain in quiet till the late disturbances among the Kaffers, occasioned by the refusal of Zambie to yield to his nephew the power of the government. Unwilling to act, or undecided which part to take, they became a common enemy; and those who remained in the country were plundered and massacred by both parties; whilst those who fled across the Great Fish river met with the same treatment from the Dutch farm-

ers of Bruyntjes Hoogté. Some sought refuge in the plains of Zuure Veldt, and were there plundered by the emigrant Kaffers. The last remaining party, with their chief at their head, had concealed themselves among the thick cover of the Rietberg, where they had been surprised by a party of straggling Kaffers, who had put the greatest part of the horde to death, and carried off the whole of their cattle. It was the remaining few who were left in this helpless and deplorable state, that came to entreat we should lay before the Kaffer king their melancholy condition, requesting they might be restored to his protection. Unluckily for them they had made their application too late; and all that could now be done, was to furnish them with documents to that king, with a verbal message favourable to their wishes.

The chief Kaabas and the gay Narina, who have furnished so long and so eccentric an episode in the page of a French gentleman's travels among these people, were no longer recollected by them. The names even were totally unknown in their language.

Notwithstanding the friendly disposition of the Kaffer king towards the emigrant chiefs, we understood at this place they had positively refused to pass the Fish river, withheld, no doubt, by the gang of outlaws before mentioned, on the banks of the Karooka. To drive them over at that time with an armed force, to be sent from the Cape expressly for that purpose, was deemed an unadvisable measure; but fresh disturbances among the foolish people of Graaff Reynet having since rendered it indispensably necessary to throw troops into that district, and the Kaffers having been instigated by promises

and presents from the boors to enter into hostilities against the British troops, coercive measures were found to be unavoidable in order to drive these people out of the colony, and break the connection that subsisted between them and the peasantry. The country is here so close and unfavourable for regular troops to act, that a small party, with an officer at their head, were cut off by surprise. Once a numerous body of Kaffers made an attack, in the day-time, upon the camp in Zuure Veldt, where they knew the ammunition to have been lodged. For the space of an hour and a half they stood the fire of musketry and two three-pound field-pieces, and endeavoured several times to storm with single hassagais in their hands, the wooden shafts being broken short off by the sockets. Several Dutch boors were among the party, firing musketry from behind the bushes. Being repulsed at length with great loss, the boors thought it best to throw themselves on mercy; the Kaffers disappeared; and the vagabond *Büys*, the chief of the outlaws and promoter of all the disturbances, fled into Kaffer-land, far beyond the dominions of Gaika.

In our way to the Drosdy we passed over the fertile division of Bruyntjes Hoogte, notorious for the turbulent spirit of its inhabitants, a set of adventurers, chiefly soldiers or sailors deserted or discharged from the Dutch army and the Company's shipping, who, having at this great distance from the seat of government found a country that with little or no labour would supply most of their wants, thought themselves independent of all authority, and attempted even to dictate to that of the Cape, which indeed was weak and timid enough to suffer their excesses to be committed with impunity.

From Bruyntjes Hoogté we descended to the Karoo plains of Camdeboo. These plains are intersected by the Bly river, the Vogel river, the Platte river, and the Melk river, in their passage from the Sneuwberg into the Sunday river. Naked as the surface appeared to be, game of every sort was very plentiful, particularly springboks and the larger kinds of antelopes. Upon those parched plains are also found a great variety of small quadrupeds that burrow in the ground, and which are known to the colonists under the general name of *meer-cats*. They are mostly of that genus of animals to which zoologists have given the name of *viverra*. An eagle, making a stoop at one of these, close where we were passing, missed his prey; and both fell a sacrifice, one to the gun, the other to the dogs. They both happened to be undescribed species. Of the eagle, the head, neck, back, and abdomen, were of a pale ferruginous brown; wings and tail steel-blue, the latter faintly barred with small bands from the root to the middle; the *cera* pale yellow; beak and nails black; the feet entirely covered with downy feathers; length two feet two inches. The viverra was wholly of a bright chesnut colour; the tail shaded with black hairs, bushy, straight, and white at the extremity; ears short and round; on the fore feet five, and the hind feet four, toes; the body and tail each one foot long. Others of this genus are the *muskiliatte cat*, or *zenik* of the *Systema Naturæ;* the *tigrina*, or tiger-cat; the *mellivora*, or *ratel;* and the *cafra*. In general these animals are easily domesticated. One species, however, is very difficult, if not impossible, to render tame. It resembles the *pectorius* or polecat of America, with this difference only, that the latter has five parallel white lines along the back, and the African species only four, that diverge from the shoulder. When first taken, they smell

very strongly of musk, which, however, shortly wears off by confinement. There is also found in this part of the country a beautiful little ground-squirrel, with a white stripe on each side from the shoulder to the flank; the body a dark chesnut colour, about eight inches in length; tail ten inches, grizzled, black, brown, and white.

That elegant bird, the Balearic crane, *grus pavonina*, was first met with near the Melk river; and Guinea fowls were very abundant near every streamlet. Bee-eaters, *merops apiaster*, with their beautiful plumage, and *certhias*, or creepers, with colours still more brilliant, were fluttering about in vast numbers among the mimosas of the Sunday river, where are also many beautiful species both of king-fishers and wood-peckers. The modest garb of the *colii*, of which I met with three species, formed a striking contrast with the gaudy plumage of the others. There are several species of swallows in the Cape, all migratory. One in particular, with a red-spotted breast, frequents the habitations of man, where it builds its nest. In many of the farm-houses are small shelves nailed against the beams, expressly for the swallows; and I have heard it asserted very commonly, that the same birds return to their places for many years, and generally on the very same day; a striking instance that Nature is not more constant in the organization of the machine, than in the effects that are intended to result from it.

The Sunday river was nearly dry, which gave our people an opportunity of taking plenty of turtle with great ease. These run generally about a foot in diameter: the females are exceedingly prolific in

eggs, and are by no means wanting in flavour. The river abounds also with short thick eels, that are very delicious. From the ford of the river to the Drosdy of Graaff Reynet, is a very short distance. We arrived at this village on the 30th September, having made our long circuitous journey in less than two months.

CHAP. IV.

Sketches on a Journey into the Country of the Bosjesmans.

THREE weeks had scarcely elapsed, after our return from the Kaffer country, till we were ready for another expedition to the northward, across the Sneuwberg or Snowy Mountains. In these mountains, and in the country immediately behind them, dwells a race of men, that, by their habits and manner of life, are justly entitled to the name of savage—a name, however, of which, it is greatly to be feared, they have been rendered more worthy by the conduct of the European settlers. They are known in the colony by the name of Bosjesmans, or men of the bushes, from the concealed manner in which they make their approaches to kill and to plunder. They neither cultivate the ground nor breed cattle, but subsist, in part, on the natural produce of their country, and make up the rest by depredations on the colonists on one side, and the neighbouring tribes of people that are more civilized than themselves, on the other. Twenty years ago, it seems, they were less numerous and less ferocious than at the present day; and their boldness and numbers are said of late to have very much increased. At one time they were pretty well kept under by regular expeditions of the peasantry against them. Each division had its commandant, who was authorised to raise a certain number of men, and these were furnished by government with powder and ball. It was a service at all times taken with reluctance, especially

by such as were least exposed to the attacks of the savages; and, during the late disturbances of Graaff Reynet, these expeditions met with considerable interruptions. The people of Bruyntjes Hoogté were the first who failed in raising their proportion of men. Zuure Veldt was deserted, and Camdeboo and Zwart Ruggens became negligent and remiss. The people of Sneuwberg, lying nearest to the common enemy, were left to sustain the whole brunt of the business; and had they not conducted themselves with great fortitude, perseverance, and address, that valuable part of the colony, the nursery of cattle, had now been abandoned. A whole division called the *Tarka*, and a great part of another, the Sea-Cow river and Rhinosceros-berg, had been deserted, as well as a small part of Sneuwberg. There is, however, another cause which, more than the interruption to the expeditions, has tended to increase the strength and the boldness of these savages, and which, unless removed, will in the end effect the utter ruin of this distant part of the colony. The case is this—The government of the Cape, which seemed to have been as little acquainted with the temper and disposition of its distant subjects as with the geography of the country, formed all its resolutions, respecting the Bosjesmans, on representations made to it by the persons immediately concerned. In consequence of these representations, it decreed that such of the Bosjesmans as should be taken alive in the expeditions made against them, were to be distributed by lot among the commandant and his party, with whom they were to remain in a state of servitude during their lives. Such as have been taken very young and well treated, have turned out most excellent servants; they have shown great talent, great activity, and great fidelity. An opposite treatment has been productive of a contrary

effect; and the brutal conduct of most of the Dutch farmers towards those in their employ, has already been noticed. The poor Hottentot bears it with patience, or sinks under it; but on the temper and the turn of mind of the Bosjesman it has a very different effect. He takes the first opportunity that offers of escaping to his countrymen, and contrives frequently to carry off with him a musket, and powder and ball. With tales of cruelty he excites them to revenge; he assists them in their plans of attack; tells them the strength of the whole, and of individuals; the number of their cattle, and the advantages and the dangers that will occur in the attempt to carry them off; the manner in which expeditions are conducted against them; and, in short, every thing he knows respecting the colonists. Armed with muskets and poisoned arrows, a party of these people was bold enough, a few days before we commenced our journey, to approach within four or five miles of the Drosdy, from whence they carried off several hundred sheep. They were followed into a kloof of one of the mountains of Sneuwberg, where they remained in possession of their plunder, laughing at their pursuers, and inviting them to approach and taste a little of their own mutton. One of them fired a musket, and the ball grazing the hat of a peasant, caused the pursuing party to make a precipitate retreat.

In order, therefore, to bring about a conversation with some of the chiefs of this people; to try if, by presents and a lenient conduct, they could be prevailed upon to quit their present wild and marauding way of life; at the same time to see the state of the colony, and the situation of the inhabitants; to inspect the boundaries, and to examine the nature of the country, a journey to the northward appear-

ed indispensably necessary. It promised also much curiosity: and as no European traveller, except the two gentlemen mentioned in the introductory Chapter, had ever ascended the mountains of Snow, a great deal of novelty was to be expected from it.

On the 20th of October we departed from the Drosdy, crossed the *Sunday* and its accompanying Karroo, and at the distance of ten miles north-westerly reached the foot of the mountains, within which a narrow defile of five miles in length, and a steep ascent of three miles at the farther extremity, led upon the extensive plains, and among the scattered mountains that composed the Sneuwberg. From the plains of Camdeboo, the fronts of these mountains appear to be the most regular formed, though the most confusedly placed, of any within the limits of the colony. The stone stratum that terminates their summits is so perfectly horizontal, and so regularly squared at the angles, that their vast height and magnitude alone contradict the idea of supposing them to be lines of masonry.

It was on one of the plains that lie extended within these clusters of mountains, where we encamped in the dusk of the evening. The wind blew fresh, and the thermometer had descended to forty-five degrees. On the preceding day, at Graaff Reynet, it stood at eighty-five in the shade till near sunset, and at seventy-six during the night; and in the course of this day's journey it was at eighty-three. The sudden change was probably occasioned, not so much by the difference of elevation, which in a Dutch manuscript journal is estimated at 4800 feet, as by the sudden evaporation of the moisture caused by a heavy fall of rain that had here continued during the preceding day and night. An extraordinary

decrease of temperature is always the consequence of continued rain in South Africa.

The following day brought us to *Waay Hoek*, or Windy Corner, the habitation of the late provisional landrost of Graaff Reynet, who had signified an inclination to accompany us on the intended expedition. He had attended Governor Van Plettenberg on his journey northwards, and had since been commandant for many years on expeditions against the Bosjesmans, which had given him an opportunity of being acquainted not only with the different parts within, but also with much of the country beyond, the limits of the colony. Having prepared himself for the journey, we remained with him only for the night; and on the following morning sent forward the waggons, while we made an excursion into the mountains on our left in search of Bosjesmans. A large party of these people had carried off a number of cattle but two days before, and another was supposed to be still hovering about in these mountains. The places of their usual haunts are easily discoverable, but generally very difficult of access, and not safe to approach. The kloofs or chasms, washed by torrents of water rushing down the steep sides of the high stratified mountains, frequently leave a succession of caverns, of which the Bosjesman chooses the highest, as not only removing him farther from the danger of a surprise, but giving him also the command of a greater extent of country.

In one of these retreats were discovered their recent traces. The fires were scarcely extinguished, and the grass on which they had slept was not yet withered. On the smooth sides of the cavern were drawings of several animals that had been made

from time to time by these savages. Many of them were caricatures; but others were too well executed not to arrest attention. The different antelopes that were there delineated had each their character so well discriminated, that the originals, from whence the representations had been taken, could, without any difficulty, be ascertained. Among the numerous animals that were drawn, was the figure of a zebra remarkably well done; all the marks and characters of this animal were accurately represented, and the proportions were seemingly correct. The force and spirit of drawings, given to them by bold touches judiciously applied, and by the effect of light and shadow, could not be expected from savages; but for accuracy of outline and correctness of the different parts, worse drawings than that of the zebra have passed through the engraver's hands. The materials with which they had been executed were charcoal, pipe-clay, and the different ochres. The animals represented were zebras, qua-chas, gemsboks, springboks, reeboks, elands, baboons, and ostriches, all of which, except the gemsbok, are found upon the very spot. Several crosses, circles, points, and lines, were placed in a long rank, as if intended to express some meaning; but no other attempt appeared at the representation of inanimate objects. In the course of travelling, I had frequently heard the peasantry mention the drawings in the mountains behind the Sneuwberg made by the Bosjesmans; but I took it for granted they were caricatures only, similar to those on the doors and walls of uninhabited buildings, the works of idle boys; and it was no disagreeable disappointment to find them very much the reverse. Some of the drawings were known to be new; but many of them had been remembered from the first settlement of this part of the colony.

A part of the upper surface of the caverns was covered with a thick coating of a black substance, that externally had the appearance of pitch. In consistence, tenacity, and colour of a brownish black, it resembled Spanish liquorice. The smell was slightly bituminous, but faint, and rather offensive. It flamed weakly in the candle, and gave out a thin brownish fluid, but no smell while burning; the residuum was a black coaly substance, two-thirds of the original bulk. The patch adhering to the rock was covered with myriads of very minute flies. In reaching up to it in order to cut off a specimen with my knife, the people called out to me to desist, assuring me that if the smallest particle got into the eye, the sight of it would be lost forever; that it was deadly poison, and used by the Hottentots to smear the points of their arrows. They all agreed in the baneful qualities of this black matter, from having experienced the fatal effects of it on several of their companions, who had suffered lingering deaths from wounds received with arrows poisoned by the *klip gift*, or rock poison. Not having as yet the opportunity of trying the deleterious quality of the substance, I cannot pretend to say whether this account of the peasantry be strictly true.

In the course of the day we arrived at the house of Krüger, the commandant of Sneuwberg, who kindly offered his services to be of our party, though he had but just returned from an expedition against the Bosjesmans. He had at this time with him in the house one of these wild men, with his two wives and a little child, which had come to him by lot, out of forty that had been taken prisoners. The man was only four feet five inches high, and his wives were still of a shorter stature, one being four feet two, and the other four feet three inches. He

represented to us the condition of his countrymen as truly deplorable. That for several months in the year, when the frost and snow prevented them from making their excursions against the farmers, their sufferings from cold and want of food were indescribable: that they frequently beheld their wives and children perishing with hunger, without being able to give them any relief. The good season even brought little alleviation to their misery. They knew themselves to be hated by all mankind, and that every nation around them was an enemy planning their destruction. Not a breath of wind rustled through the leaves, not a bird screamed, that were not supposed to announce danger. Hunted thus like beasts of prey, and ill-treated in the service of the farmers, he said that they considered themselves driven to desperation. The burden of their song was, vengeance against the Dutch. This little man was intended to have accompanied us; but as he seemed more inclined to abide by his wives, he was permitted to follow his uxorious inclinations.

Proceeding to the northward, a curious but truly deplorable spectacle presented itself. It was a troop of locusts resting upon the ground. They covered a space of about one square mile in extent, so completely that the surface appeared to the eye, at a little distance, to have been burnt and strewed over with brown ashes. Not a shrub nor blade of grass was visible. The waggons passed directly through them, before which they rose up in a cloud that darkened the air on each side. Desirous of seeing the whole troop on the wing, the Hottentots ran amongst them, and the horses were made to gallop through them, but without success; none but such as were immediately under the feet of the men and horses, rose up. The peasantry affirm, that they

are not to be driven away unless the signal for departure should be given from their commander in chief, one of which is supposed to accompany every troop.

On the evening of the 23d, we encamped at the foot of a large mountain, remarkable for its pointed peak, and also from its detached situation. It was separated from all the circumjacent mountains, on four sides, by as many large level meadows, abundant in springs of water. It forms one of the highest points of South Africa. The waters flow from the surrounding meadows in every direction; a circumstance from which Colonel Gordon probably was induced to give it the name of the *Compass Mountain*. On the south-east side is the source of the Sunday river. On all the others are springs whose streamlets unite at no great distance from their sources, and flow directly to the north. The general surface of the country, on the northern side of the mountain, is at least fifteen hundred feet above the source of the Sunday river; and the height of the peak above this general surface was found, by trigonometrical measurement, to be also very nearly fifteen hundred feet.

The rills of water that meandered through the meadows, were covered with the common reed, and these were frequented with vast flocks of small birds, particularly with the *loxia orix*, called by English ornithologists the *granadier*, and by the French, the cardinal of the Cape of Good Hope. The male is remarkable for its gaudy plumage during the spring and summer months: in these seasons the neck, breast, back, upper and under part of the rump, are of a bright crimson; the throat and abdomen are glossy black. During the other six months it is

stripped of its gaudy attire, and adopts the modest garb of the female, which is at all times that of a greyish brown. They are gregarious, and build their nests in large societies. Another remarkable bird we observed in the reeds. This was the long-tailed finch, described in the *Systema Naturæ* as the *loxia Caffray*, on the authority of Thunberg; and in the same book, with more propriety, as the *emberiza longicauda*. The changes that this bird undergoes are still more extraordinary than those of the granadier. The black feathers of its tail, which are fifteen inches long, while the body is barely five, are placed in vertical positions like those of the domestic cock. The bounty of nature seems to have been extended to this bird to its disadvantage; its tail, when on the wing, impeding, instead of assisting, its flight. This long tail, however, endures but the season of love. In the winter it assumes the same as that of the female, short, brown, and horizontal, and it can then fly like other birds. The change of plumage, in many birds, from that of the male to the female, and the contrary, has led some speculative naturalists to adopt an opinion, that a change of sex also actually takes place. This, however, is not the case with respect to the two birds in question. The long-tailed finch appears to be one of those few of the feathered tribe that, in a state of nature, are found to be polygamous. I have frequently seen from thirty to forty of their nests together in one clump of reeds, but never more than two males at one place. The construction of their nests is very curious. These are entirely composed of green grass neatly plaited into a round ball, and knotted fast between the stems of two reeds. The entrance is through a tube whose orifice is on the under side, next to the water.

The termination of the Snowy mountains is about twelve miles to the north-eastward of Compassberg; and here a port or pass through them opens upon a plain extending to the northward, without a swell, farther than the eye could command. Eight miles beyond this pass we encamped for the night, when the weather was more raw and cold than we had hitherto experienced on the Sneuwberg. The thick clouds being at length dissipated by the sun, the Compassberg showed itself white near the summit with snow.

The division of Sneuwberg comprehends a great extent of country. The moment we had ascended from the plains behind Graaff Reynet to those more elevated of Sneuwberg, the difference of the face of the country and its natural productions were remarkably striking. One of the characters of the African mountains, as already has been noticed, is that of having one of their sides steep and lofty, whilst the opposite one gradually sloped off in an inclined plane. The Compassberg is the last to the northward that presents a bold and high front to the southern horizon. Beyond this the northern aspects of the mountains are the highest.

It was an observation sufficiently striking, and which must have occurred to every one who has been the least attentive to the mountains and rivers of South Africa, that the ascent of the former invariably increases with the descent of the latter; or, in other words, that the highest sides of the mountains face that quarter towards which the rivers flow, whilst their sloping sides are opposed to the streams. That such, indeed, are the appearances which ought to present themselves on the surface of every country of Neptunian origin, is conformable to what

may every day be observed, on a small scale, in the beds of rivers and most water-courses. The banks of earth or sand, that the current of waters has there deposited, have always their highest points down the stream. The reason is too obvious to require an explanation. The formation of such banks in the beds of rivers, supplies also another observation that is generally found to take place on the grand scale. They continue to elongate at both extremities: the upper increases by the diminution of the stream, which it has divided and thrown on each side, and the lower by the eddy caused from the meeting again of this divided current. Analogous to this effect, the point of land between the confluence of two rivers has been observed, by an able geographer, always to travel downwards towards the sea; and the point of land that divides a river, to travel upwards towards the source.

The clusters of mountains that form what is usually called the Sneuwberg, are composed of sand-stone lying nearly in horizontal strata; few of them were observed to have the quartzy summits that prevailed in the great ranges near the Cape, and that of Zwarteberg; but their bases, like these, rested on blue schistus. The soil of the Sneuwberg was generally clayey, frequently clodded together in indurated masses that appeared greasy to the eye, and such masses contained a large portion of dark foliated mica. The plants that chiefly prevailed on the elevated parts, were tufts of long grass, small heathy shrubs, a beautiful mesembryanthemum with large clusters of small, bright, red flowers, and another that seemed to differ in nothing from the former, except in the colour of the petals, which were white. Besides these were also a small diosma, and two species of the iris with tall spikes of flowers, one

blue, the other yellow. The lower parts of the plains were charmingly embroidered with almost the whole tribe of syngenesious plants. Of these were most abundant various species of *arctotis, othonna, cineraria, aster, calendula, athanasia, tanecetum, senecio,* and *gnaphalium,* all of them, at this time, in the height of their bloom.

But that which mostly discriminated the Sneuwberg from other parts of the country, was the total want of shrubbery. For miles together these elevated plains produced not a stick. We passed one kloof between two hills, in which stood about a dozen small mimosas; and nothing could more strongly have marked the scarcity of bushes, than the prodigious quantity of nests that these contained, made by different species of small birds, chiefly sparrows, finches, and grossbeaks. They were scattered over the branches as thickly as those of crows in a rookery; and, what was still more remarkable, there stood in the same bush, with six or eight others, the nest of a hawk, containing two white eggs with small crimson specks. The bird, on the wing, appeared to be brown and white, and was named by the peasantry the white falcon. The nests of the small birds were mostly hedged round with thorns, and, like that of the magpie, had a cover built over them, and they were all entered through tubes or small holes.

It is a remarkable fact, that there are many persons in Sneuwberg who have never seen a tree.—Even the commandant, who for many years had traversed the whole country to the northward in expeditions against the Bosjesmans, had never seen a wood till he came with us, on the present journey, into the Kaffer country. Very few of the

houses have a stick of any sort standing near them. The violent winds, more than the intensity of the cold, injure the growth of plants; for oaks even, that in Europe bear almost any degree of cold, will not grow on the Sneuwberg.

The fuel used by the inhabitants is the dung of animals collected in the places where their cattle are nightly pent up, to prevent their destruction by wolves and other beasts of prey, and their depredation by Bosjesmans. In the spring of the year this is dug out in long squares, as turf is cut from the bog in the northern parts of England; these are spread out to dry, and then, like turf, are piled up in stacks for the winter's consumption. At all the farm-houses we passed they were busily employed in cutting or in stacking their fuel.

The causes that operate against the growth of trees and shrubs, extend not to the gramineous plants. Grain of all kinds is fully as productive here as in the lower districts; but the crops are generally a month, and sometimes two, later, which renders them liable to be caught in the season of thunder that is exceedingly violent in these mountains, and almost always attended by heavy showers of hail. The finest crops have sometimes been completely destroyed by these in the course of half an hour. The returns, however, of this season being tolerably constant, commencing generally with the new year, they can in most years prevent the evil by an early seed-time. But there is a calamity of a different nature attending their crops, against which there seems to be no remedy. This arises from the multitudes of locusts with which they are occasionally infested. When these insects make their appearance, not a single field of corn remains uncon-

sumed by them. In the present year, I don't suppose that the whole of the Sneuwberg will produce a single bushel. In such years the inhabitants eat no bread; they bear the evil with great patience, and console themselves by saying, that they must make up for the loss in this article by killing a double quantity of mutton. But the greatest of all the drawbacks on the profits of their farms is that occasioned by the depredations of the Bosjesmans. Their corn is cultivated merely for home consumption; their cattle are reared for the market. All their care, and the constant attendance of numerous Hottentots in their employ, are sometimes insufficient to prevent a surprise from these savages. An inhabitant of Sneuwberg has not only the continual apprehension of losing his property, but he lives in a state of perpetual personal danger. Should he depart to the distance of five hundred yards from his house, he is under the necessity of carrying a musket. He can neither plow, nor sow, nor reap, without his arms. If he would gather a few greens in the garden, he must take his gun in his hand.—To bear a life of such constant dread and anxiety, a man must be accustomed to it from his infancy, and unacquainted with one that is better. Notwithstanding this, Sneuwberg has its temptation. It may be considered as the best nursery for sheep in the whole colony. They are here much superior to those of the other districts both in size and condition. The tails of some of them are not less than twenty pounds weight; many run from twelve to sixteen pounds. A farmer here has seldom fewer than from three to four thousand sheep. They derive no sort of benefit from the wool, which is short and harsh like hair. That this is owing to the breed, and not to the climate, has been shown by the introduction of some Spanish sheep a few years ago,

the wool of which is supposed to have improved by their continuance in Africa: specimens of it sent to the London market, are said to have fetched an unusual high price. Were one of Bakewell's rams introduced into the Sneuwberg, there can be little doubt that an excellent breed would be the consequence.

The higher parts of the Sneuwberg are not better calculated for sheep, than the plains are for horned cattle. The butter made here is supposed to be preferable to any other in the colony, and of course is much sought after in the Cape, where it is brought in considerable quantity, salted and put up in casks. They reckon, that on a moderately good farm fifty cows will produce a hundred pounds of butter a-week, besides bringing up the calves, which are always suffered to run with their mothers. The draught oxen are large, stout, and generally in good condition; and their horses, though small, go through a great deal of hard service. In many parts they are very subject to the common disease of the country, which proves fatal to great numbers. This disease, however, is entirely local. At one farm they were never known to have it, whilst at another, not more than six miles from it, they can scarcely keep a horse alive; a convincing proof of its being occasioned by certain plants whose leaves, or flowers, or fruits, possess a deleterious quality. The Bosjesmans are well aware of the time when the distemper rages, and are then particularly bold and troublesome, knowing it to be impossible for the farmers to pursue them.

Such are the advantages and the calamities of which the people of Sneuwberg are alternately susceptible. Sensible of the former, they bear the latter

with much patience, and oppose them with fortitude. They are a people that, in a great measure, seem to be apart from all the others. Not more different is the nature of the country than the temper and disposition of its inhabitants from those of the lower divisions of the district. They are a peaceable, obliging, and orderly people; a brave and hardy race of men. The constant danger to which their persons and their property are exposed, will less admit a life of idleness and inactivity; and it is not in the men alone that their dangerous situation has called forth the active powers, but the women also evidently possess more animation, and lead a less sedentary and listless life, than those of the lower divisions. Instances of great female fortitude have here occasionally been shown. The wife of one of our party having received intelligence, in the absence of her husband, that the Bosjesmans had carried off a troop of their sheep, instantly mounted her horse, took a musket in her hand, and, accompanied by a single Hottentot, engaged the plunderers for some time, put them to flight, and recovered every sheep.

With infinitely more drawbacks on the produce of their industry than any of their countrymen experience, the anarchy that prevailed in Graaff Reynet produced no sort of disturbance among the people of Sneuwberg. They lent a material assistance indeed to promote the measures of government. The only grievance of which I ever heard them complain, and which appears to be a real inconvenience to all who inhabit the remote parts of the colony, is a ridiculous and absurd law respecting marriage; and as it seems to have no foundation in reason, and little in policy, except indeed, like the marriage-acts in other countries, it be intended as a check to population, it ought to be repealed. By this law

the parties are both obliged to be present at the Cape, in order to answer certain interrogatories, and pass the forms of office there, the chief intent of which is to see that no improper marriages take place; as if the commissaries appointed to this office, at the distance of five or six hundred miles, should be better acquainted with the connections and other circumstances regarding the parties, than the landrost, the clergyman, and the members of the council residing upon the spot. The expense of the journey to the young couple is greater than they frequently can well afford. For decency's sake they must set out in two waggons, though in the course of a month's journey, across a desert country, it is said they generally make one serve, and that nine times out of ten the consummation of the marriage precedes the ceremony. This naturally produces another bad consequence. The poor girl, after the familiarities of a long journey, lies entirely at the mercy of the man, who, having satisfied his curiosity or his passion, sometimes deserts her at the end. Though in our own country a trip to Scotland be sometimes taken where obstacles at a nearer distance could not safely be surmounted, yet it would be considered as a very ridiculous, as well as oppressive law, that should oblige the parties intending to marry to go from the Land's End to London to effect that purpose. The inhabitants of Graaff Reynet must travel twice that distance in order to be married.

Almost all the people of the Snowy mountains, who were advanced in years, were subject to gravelly complaints, occasioned probably by the badness of the water, which at one season of the year is a muddy mixture of snow and earth, and at the other strongly impregnated with salt. And not to the

human species alone are complaints of this nature here confined, but almost all animals, whether domesticated or in a state of nature, are found to have more or less of stones or masses of sand formed in the bladder or stomach. Large oval stones are very commonly found in the stomach of the springbok, and numbers of a smaller size in the eggs of ostriches, as has before been remarked.

On the twenty-fifth we proceeded about twenty miles to the northward, over a flat surface of country, consisting chiefly of meadow-ground, well watered by numerous springs and small rills, but destitute of every appearance of a bush or shrub. On every side were grazing a multitude of wild animals, as gnoos, and qua-chas, and hartebeests, and springboks, in such large troops as in no part of the country had before been observed. The place of our encampment was called *Gordon's Fonteyn*, and near it stood the last Christian habitation, towards this quarter, in the colony. Being situated so near to the Bosjesmans, no fewer than four families were living together, as a better security to each other against the attacks of these people.

Having understood, that beyond this place it would no longer be safe to proceed without an armed force, the inhabitants of Sneuwberg and its several divisions had been summoned to meet us here, in order that the commandant might select as many as should be deemed sufficient to enable us to march through the country. He took sixteen farmers and eight armed Hottentots, which, with our own party and the other Hottentots employed as drivers and leaders, amounted altogether to about fifty persons. There were seven waggons, about a hundred oxen, and fifty horses, besides a troop of fifty or sixty sheep

for consumption on the journey. The people whom the commandant made choice of, were all young men, who, reluctantly as at all times they take the service of the regular expeditions, seemed delighted on the present occasion, which they considered in the light only of a party of pleasure.

On the evening of the twenty-sixth we collected our forces at the commencement of the *Sea-Cow* river, which was about six miles to the northward of the last habitation. This river is formed from the collected branches that fall to the northward from the different parts of Sneuwberg, and from the *Roode-berg*, or Red Mountain, which is in fact an arm of the former, stretching to the northward. The Sea-Cow river, and indeed all the streams that behind the Snowy mountains ran northerly, were remarkably distinguished from those whose currents took an opposite direction, by having their banks covered with tall reeds, the *arundo phragmites*, and destitute of a shrub or tree; whereas the latter were always inclosed by mimosas, willows, and other tall arboreous plants. The northern rivers consisted generally of a chain of deep stagnant pools, connected by the beds of narrow channels that for the greatest part of the year are entirely dry. Some of the *gats*, or holes, of the Sea-Cow river were five or six miles in length, and deep enough to have floated a line-of-battle ship. They formerly contained vast numbers of the animal from whence the river has borrowed its name; but the proximity of the colony, and the great convenience of hunting them in these pools, have been the means of destroying them almost entirely. Now and then a hippopotamus is still taken in some of the holes of the river.

The following day we passed over plains that swarmed with game. Pursuing the gnoos and dif-

ferent antelopes, we killed a prodigious large tiger-wolf, such as has been described, two qua-chas, and a couple of snakes of the same species, one five, the other near six feet long; their colour was entirely a golden yellow; they were very fierce, and made several attempts to spring at the horses. The peasantry considered them as very venomous, and gave them the name of *cobra capella*.

Twenty miles farther to the northward brought us to that part of the river where Governor Van Plettenberg ended his travels towards this quarter; and, in commemoration of the event, he caused a stone or *baaken* to be there erected, which he also intended should serve as a point in the line of demarcation between the colony and the country of the Bosjesmans. These people, however, had thrown down and broken in pieces the monument; but the place retained the name of the *Edel Heer's baaken;* and the large hole of the river, upon the bank of which it stood, bore the name of Plettenberg.

The baaken of the governor was less a subject of curiosity than one that appeared on the opposite bank of the river. This was a clump of about half a dozen large bushes, the first that had occurred for as many days; yet the rarity of frutescent plants would not have attracted so much notice, had it not been for the vast number and size of nests with which they appeared to be loaded. These were judged to be at least sufficiently large for the vultures that were hovering in the air, or for the large blue cranes that sat by the river's side near them. On approaching the bushes, a numerous flock of birds, about the size of the common sky-lark, issued from them. The farmers, though unacquainted with the nests, immediately recognised the bird to be the lo-

cust-eater, and rejoiced not a little at its appearance so near the colony. This species of thrush is a migrating bird, and is only met with in places where the migrating locust frequents. It had not been seen in the colony for the space of thirteen years; that is to say, since the last time that the locusts infested the Sneuwberg. The head, breast, and back, are of a pale cinereous colour; the abdomen and rump white; wings and tail black, the latter short and a little forked; from the angle of the mouth a naked area of sulphureous yellow extends under the eye and a little beyond it; and two naked black striæ under the throat. The specific name of *gryllivorus* may with propriety be given to it, as its whole food seems to consist of the larvæ of this insect, at least when they are to be obtained. Nature has seldom given a bane but she has accompanied it with an antidote; or, in other words, she has ordained that one half of the creation should destroy and devour the other, that the constant operations of reproduction might be going on. The numbers of the grillevori are not less astonishing than those of the locusts. Their nests, that at a distance appeared to be of such great magnitude, were found on examination to consist of a number of cells, each of which was a separate nest, with a tube that led into it through the side. Of such cells each clump contained from six to twenty; and one roof of interwoven twigs covered the whole, like that made by the magpie. Most of them had young birds, generally five; the eggs were of a blueish white, with small, faint, reddish specks. These birds had here taken up a temporary abode in a place where they were not likely, in a short space of time, to be under the necessity of quitting for want of food. Of the innumerable multitudes of the incomplete insect, or larva, of the locusts, that at this time in-

fested this part of Africa, no adequate idea could possibly be conceived without having witnessed them. For the space of ten miles on each side of the Sea-Cow river, and eighty or ninety miles in length, an area of sixteen or eighteen hundred square miles, the whole surface might literally be said to be covered with them. The water of the river was scarcely visible on account of the dead carcases that floated on the surface, drowned in the attempt to come at the reeds which grew in the water. They had devoured every green herb and every blade of grass; and had it not been for the reeds, on which our cattle entirely subsisted while we skirted the banks of the river, the journey must have been discontinued, at least in the line that had been proposed. The larvæ, as generally is the case in this class of nature, are much more voracious than the perfect insect; nothing that is green seems to come amiss to them. They are not, however, without a choice in their food. When they attack a field of corn just struck into the ear, they first mount to the summit, and pick out every grain before they touch the leaves and the stem. In such a state it is lamentable to see the ruins of a fine field of corn. The insect seems constantly to be in motion, and to have some object in view. When on a march during the day, it is utterly impossible to turn the direction of a troop, which is generally with the wind. The traces of their route over the country are very obvious for many weeks after they have passed it, the surface appearing as if swept by a broom, or as if a harrow had been drawn over it. Towards the setting of the sun the march is discontinued, when the troop divides into companies, which surround the small shrubs, or tufts of grass, or ant-hills, and in such thick patches that they appear like so many swarms of bees; and in this manner they

rest till day-light. It is at such times as they are thus formed, that the farmers have any chance of destroying them, which they sometimes effect by driving among them a flock of two or three thousand sheep. By the restlessness of these they are trampled to death.

Luckily the visits of this gregarious insect are but periodical, otherwise the whole country must inevitably be deserted, for they rest, as the prophet in Holy Writ hath said, "upon all thorns and upon "all bushes." Even at this time the cattle in many parts of Sneuwberg are starving for want of food. The present year is the third of their continuance, and their increase has far exceeded that of a geometrical progression, whose ratio is a million. For ten years preceding their present visit, they were entirely free from them. Their last exit from the colony was rather singular. All the full-grown insects were driven into the sea by a tempestuous north-west wind, and were afterwards cast upon the beach, where it is said they formed a bank of three of four feet high, that extended from the mouth of the Bosjesman's river to that of the Beeka, a distance of near fifty English miles; and it is asserted, that when this mass became putrid, and the wind was at south-east, the stench was sensibly felt in several parts of Sneuwberg. Fortunately they were driven thus to sea before they had deposited their eggs in the ground. The larvæ at the same time were emigrating to the northward. The column passed the houses of two of our party, who asserted that it continued without any interruption for more than a month. The gryllivori in myriads were close at their heels, and departed along with them, since which, till the present year, not one of them was to be found in the country.

Hunting excursions had daily been made on the plains, at a distance from the river, where game of all sorts were in the greatest abundance; but the chief object was the *gnoo*, or *wild beast*, as it is called by the Dutch. Parties of five or six had been out for two days, in order to procure one of these animals, but without success. On the third day we mustered a company of ten persons, and after a very long chase contrived at length to hem in a troop consisting of about fifty, out of which, at one volley, we shot six. This extraordinary animal is the swiftest beast that ranges the plains of Africa. A traveller has not always the opportunity of getting it into his possession. The various descriptions that have been given of it, all differing from each other, should seem to have been taken from report rather than from nature, notwithstanding that one of them was for some time in the menagerie of the Prince of Orange at the Hague. Nature, though regular and systematic in all her works, often puzzles and perplexes human systems, of which this animal affords an instance. It partakes of the horse, the ox, the stag, and the antelope: the shoulders, body, thighs, and mane, are equine; the head completely bovine; the tail partly one and partly the other, exactly like that of the qua-cha; the legs, from the knee-joints downwards, and the feet, are slender and elegant like those of the stag, and it has the *subocular sinus* that is common to most, though not all, of the antelope tribe. Yet from this imperfect character it has been arranged, on the authority of Sparrman, in the *Systema Naturæ*, among the antelopes, to which of the four it has certainly the least affinity. The Linnæan system can be considered only as the alphabet of nature, the characters of which cannot be too distinctly marked; of course, external appearances only should enter into it. Perhaps the

introduction of *intermediate genera* might without impropriety be adopted, to include such animals as are found to partake of more than one genus; which would also point out the fine links that unite the grand chain of creation. The *gnoo* is a second time mentioned in the *Systema Naturæ*, and with more propriety, as a variety of the *bos cæffer*, or buffalo, under the name of *elegans et parvus Africanus bos, &c.*

Its head is about eighteen inches long; the upper part completely guarded by the rugged roots of the horns that spread across the forehead, having only a narrow channel between them that wears out with age, as in those of the buffalo; the horns project forwards twelve inches, then turn in a short curve backwards ten inches; from the root to the point is only nine inches; down the middle of the face grows a ridge of black hair four inches in length; and from the under lip to the throat another ridge somewhat longer: the orbit of the eye is round, and surrounded by long white hairs that, like so many radii, diverge and form a kind of star: this radiated eye gives to the animal a fierce and very uncommon look. The same sort of white vitrissæ are thinly dispersed over the lips: the neck is little more than a foot long: on the upper part is a mane extending beyond the shoulders, erect, and five inches in length; the hair like bristles, black in the middle and white on each side; this mane appears if it had been cut and trimmed: a ridge of black hair six inches long extends from the fore part of the chest under the fore legs to the beginning of the abdomen: the body is about three feet two inches long; the joints of the hip-bones project high, and form on the buttocks a pair of hemispheres: the tail is two feet long, flat near the root, where the hair grows only out of the sides; this is white, bristly, and bushy:

the whole length, from the point of the nose to the end of the tail, seven feet ten inches, and the height three feet six inches: the colour is that of a mouse, with a few ferruginous straggling hairs on the sides: like the mare it has only two teats; and all its habits and its motions are equine: though a small animal, it appears of very considerable size when prancing over the plains. The *gnoo* might be considered as an emblem of unbounded freedom, with the means of supporting it. Strength, swiftness, weapons of defence, a nice nose, and a quick sight, it eminently possesses. No successful attempts have yet been made to tame it. The flesh is so like that of an ox, both in appearance and taste, that it is not to be distinguished from it.

The heavy lumpish figure of the eland formed a great contrast with the elegant shape of the gnoo. The former were not less numerous than the latter, and as easily taken as the other was difficult. Of all the species of antelopes in Southern Africa, this is by much the largest and most aukward. The head, the thick neck, and dewlap of the male, the body, legs, and hoofs, are bovine. The horns and tail only indicate its affinity to the antelope tribe. Its habit, its gait, its size, and general appearance, are those of the ox. The *gnoo*, when wounded, becomes furious, and turns upon his pursuer; and he is said to be so impatient of pain and danger, that, in order to put a speedy end to them, he will frequently fly to a pit of water and drown himself. The eland is altogether as mild and patient. On account of the great ease with which they are taken, the utility of their flesh as food, and of their skins for harness and traces, few of them now remain within the limits of the colony; and in a few years the eland will in all probability be a rare beast in

the southern angle of Africa. The rude farmers, who, like children, grasp only at the gratification of the moment, without any regard to futurity, are taking the best means in the world to hasten their extirpation. The bull, being much larger, fatter, and having a tougher hide, than the female, is always selected from the herd and hunted down; the consequence of which is, that numbers of herds are now met with consisting of females only. They are very subject also to a cutaneous disease, that makes great havoc among the bovine tribe. It is called by the farmers the *brandt sickté*, or burning disease. It generally makes its appearance among the cattle towards the end of the rainy season. The hair begins to fall off; the skin is covered with scurf and scabs; the joints become stiff, and the animal languishes, consumes, and dies. All the antelopes are more or less subject to it, but chiefly so the gnoo, the hartebeest, and the eland, these approaching nearest to the nature of the ox. The plains were strewed with the skeletons of these and other animals that had fallen by the disease. The eland of the Cape is the *oreas* of the *Systema Naturæ*, and the Indian antelope of Pennant. The male of one we shot, measured ten feet and a half in length, and six feet and a half in height.

Upon the plains of the Sea-Cow river were springboks in countless troops, hartebeests and bontéboks. The last antelope is marked the same as the *scripta* of the *Systema Naturæ*; but the brown colour is darker, and the animal considerably smaller than the bontébok of Zwellendam. Qua-chas from fifty to a hundred in a troop were hourly seen. The smaller kinds of game were also very plentiful. Hares were continually among the horses' feet. Of this animal are four known species in or near

the colony; the common hare, the Cape hare, the mountain hare, and the red-rumped hare. Of the last, the exterior part of the thighs and its long tail are of a deep chesnut colour, and the ears are much shorter than in the others. Cape partridges and the Hamaaqua grous were equally plentiful. The latter is a gregarious bird, and was met with in large coveys near all the springs of water. They were so little intimidated at the approach of our people, that they suffered themselves to be knocked down with whips and sticks. A new species of korhaen or bustard was seen here, that appeared to be something like the *tetrix*, or French field-duck, but it was so very wild and scarce, that not one of them could be shot. The Egyptian black *ibis (niger)* and another species of *tantalus*, called by the farmers the *haddadas*, were procured at this place. The latter uttered the most horrid screams that can be imagined. The beak is black; the ridge of the upper mandible, and the upper part of the toes, red; head, neck, and abdomen, cinereous blue; wing and tail feathers, deep violet blue; back feathers green, edged with dusky brown; shoulders and covering feathers of the wings of a metallic lustre and iridescent. The mountain goose, the Egyptian goose, and the mountain duck, were seen in considerable numbers. The last answers to the description of the *cana;* but there is a mistake in giving the white head to the male, which is found only in the female. Several other aquatic birds were met with about the Sea-Cow river, attracted thither by the vast quantities of fish that it contained. Of these a species of *cyprinus* of a silvery colour was the most common; and we caught also a species of *silurus*. The most remarkable of the birds were the *platalea leucorodia*, or white spoonbill, the great white pelican, and the flamingo. We saw also the

common crane *(grus)* the Numidian crane *(virgo)* and the heron *(cinerea)* the bald ibis *(calvus)* the Cape curlew, and the common coot.

In the neighbourhood of such places as are most frequented by gramenivorous animals, the carnivorous tribe are, as might naturally be expected, the most abundant. The peasantry were, however, much surprised that no more than one lion had been seen by the party among the reedy banks of the Sea-Cow river, a part of the country that has at all times been considered as particularly infested by them, and where they are also of a much larger size and fiercer temper than those of the lower parts of the colony. The people of Sneuwberg are very great sufferers from their frequent visits, particularly in their horses, an animal to the flesh of which the lion seems to give a decided preference. The farmers here have a kind of dog that is not afraid to attack a lion; and it is said, that two of these together have been known to destroy one. It is as large, but not so strongly made, as the Newfoundland dog, of a dark cinereous brown, with black and ferruginous stripes, a long straight tail, long pendulous ears, and spurious toes on the hind legs. Of tigers, as they are called in the colony, the peasantry distinguish two sorts, the tiger of the mountains and the tiger of the plains. Of the first, the upper part of the body and exterior part of the legs are of a fallow ground, with irregular black spots, some circular, some lunated, and others ocellated; in some parts distinct, in others running together in clusters; the sides, belly, and interior parts of the legs, a white ground, with large black circular spots; upper part of the tail fulvous, with oblong black spots; under part barred across with alternate black and white bands; vibrissæ or strong bristles about the

mouth, silvery white; a black line along the fore part of the shoulders to the chest; length from the nose to the end of the tail seven feet four inches; length of the tail two feet ten inches. The description answers very nearly to that of the leopard, of which I believe it to be a variety only. The tiger of the plains is evidently the same species, the only difference being in the size, which is a little larger than that of the former, and in the colour of the ground, which is a little lighter, both of which probably may arise from local circumstances. To another species of the feline tribe they give the name of leopard. It is not so long, but thicker, taller, and much stronger than those described above: the colour is cinereous, with small black spots; the neck and temples covered with long crisp hair like that of the mane of the lion; tail two feet, flat, vertical, spotted half way from the root, and the other half annulated; a thick black line from the interior angle of the eye extends to the opening of the mouth. Of this species we procured a young one; it became instantly tame, and as playful as the domestic kitten. Most beasts of prey, if taken young, may almost instantly be rendered tame. The fierce lion, or the tiger, is sooner reconciled to a state of domestication than the timid antelope; and the cadaverous *crocuta*, the wild dog, has lately been domesticated in the Sneuwberg, where it is now considered as one of the best hunters after game, and as faithful and diligent as any of the common sort of domestic dogs.

Birds, as well as beasts of prey, are attracted to such places as abound with game. By the Sea-Cow river, vultures were more numerous than they had hitherto been seen in any part of the country. Of these were distinguished three sorts; the large black

condor, the *percnopterus*, or Egyptian sacred vulture, and a third, that seemed to differ from the second only in size, being no more than two feet long. The female also of this bird, as well as that of the percnopterus, is distinguished from the whitish-coloured male by its plumage of dusky brown. This small species is called by the peasantry the white crow. The sacred scavenger of Egypt meets not here with that protection which was afforded it on the banks of the Nile, where, according to Herodotus, to destroy it was a capital crime. The percnopterus is a gregarious bird. They fly in troops that seldom consist of fewer than fifty; and they are generally attended with two or three condors, as many of the small white kind, and a whole flock of the vulturine crow. An animal is no sooner shot, than they appear hovering at an immense height in the air, from whence they plunge down the moment that the carcase is left alone.

Snakes of different sorts were seen and killed daily, all of them, according to the Hottentots' information, more or less venomous. These people are not unacquainted with several interesting particulars as to the nature and habits of the animal, as well as the vegetable part of the creation. From one I learned a very extraordinary effect produced by the application of the oil of tobacco to the mouth of a snake. One of these reptiles, about two feet in length, and of a blueish colour, had coiled itself five or six times round the body of a lizard. As I was endeavouring to set at liberty the captive animal, one of the Hottentots took out with the point of a stick, from the short stem of his wooden tobacco pipe, a small quantity of a thick black matter, which he called tobacco oil. This he applied to the mouth of the snake while darting out its

tongue, as these creatures usually do when enraged. The effect of the application was instantaneous almost as that of an electric shock. With a convulsed motion, that was momentary, the snake half untwisted itself, and never stirred more; and the muscles were so contracted, that the whole animal felt hard and rigid as if dried in the sun. The Hottentots consider the oil of tobacco among the most active of poisonous substances; but it is never applied to the points of their arrows, being probably of too volatile a nature to retain its deleterious quality for any length of time.

In the course of our long hunting excursions, several kraals, or dwelling-places of Bosjesmans, had been seen, but all of them deserted; and from many circumstances it was evident that most of them had recently been evacuated. Their inhabitants, no doubt, had fled at the appearance of so large a party of Europeans, which they could consider in no other light than that of an enemy. The commandant now announced to his people, that for a time all hunting parties must be suspended, and that the same regular order and obedience to commands should be observed as in their usual expeditions. He assured us, that unless this plan was adopted, we might pass through the heart of the Bosjesmans' country without seeing a human creature, as there was little doubt of their being already well apprised of our approach. This in fact was the principal object of our present journey, that we might be eye-witnesses of the manner in which the farmers conducted their expeditions against these miserable set of beings. I thought it, however, a necessary step to make a previous stipulation with the commandant, that the extent of hostilities against these savages should be that of surrounding one of their kraals; that after

this had been done, we should act only on the defensive; and he was enjoined to deliver to his people a most serious charge, not to fire a single shot unless it should be found absolutely necessary for their own personal security; for that the sole object of our journey was to bring about, if possible, a conversation with some of the chiefs of this people. On these conditions, a party, consisting of six farmers and as many Hottentots, were ordered out after sunset to reconnoitre, with instructions to examine well if any fires should appear on any of the hills by night; to watch well, from some concealed spot, the plains by day; and to make a circuit from east to north, not exceeding thirty miles from the present encampment. If nothing should appear before the expiration of the third day, they were then to join us again at a certain spot upon the banks of the river, to the northward.

The following morning, at day-break, one of the scouting party, attended by a Hottentot, returned with intelligence that they had discovered from a high hill several fires at the bottom of a narrow defile about twenty miles to the eastward. In consequence of this information, we remained still at our encampment the whole day, and at night proceeded towards the place where the fires had been seen. Previous to this movement, the colonists prepared themselves for the enterprise by singing three or four hymns out of William Sluiter, and drinking each a glass of brandy.

Travelling slowly along, and without noise, till about one o'clock, we halted the waggons, and, taking the other hymn and glass of brandy, mounted horse and advanced towards the hill, where the rest of the reconnoitring party lay concealed, in order

to observe the motions of the Bosjesmans. In a country where there is little variety of surface, where no beaten roads exist, and hill after hill occurs nearly alike, it would be no easy matter for a stranger to return upon the same track for a continuance of twenty or thirty miles which he had but once before gone over, and that in the night. A Dutch peasant, though sufficiently expert at this sort of service, always depends more upon his Hottentot than himself. The hill, however, that the reconnoitring party had chosen, was so very remarkable that it could not easily be mistaken. It stood quite alone on the middle of a plain; was visible for more than twenty miles from every point of the compass; presented the form of a truncated cone from whatsoever situation it was seen; and the third tier of sandstone strata that capped its summit, appeared as a mass of masonry, a fortification on an eminence that could not be less than a thousand feet high. As a distinction, we gave it the name of *Tower-berg*, because this mountain,

> " . . . . . above the rest,
> " In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
> " Stood like a tower."

About two o'clock in the morning we joined the scouting party at the base of this mountain. They and their horses had been exposed the whole of the preceding day to the scorching rays of the sun, not having dared to move from the spot, lest they should be discovered and cut off by the Bosjesmans; and they had but just returned from giving their horses a little water, near fifteen miles off, in the Sea-Cow river. They gave information, that during the day vast numbers of the savages had appeared upon the plain digging up roots: that they came from different quarters, and in so many groupes, that they con-

cluded there must be several hordes in the neighbourhood of this spot: that the nearest, which it was the intention to surprise, was within two or three miles.

Having halted here a couple of hours, in order to arrive at the mouth of the defile, in which the kraal was situated, just at the first dawn of day, the march was continued in solemn silence. As we entered the defile, it was perceived that at the opposite extremity a hill stretched across, admitting a pass on either side; the party, therefore, divided into three companies, in order to possess all the passes; and they again closed together slowly towards the hill, at the foot of which the horde was supposed to lie. A Hottentot, having ascended one of the heights, waved his hat as a signal of discovery, and then pointed to the spot where the horde was situated. We instantly set off on full gallop, and in a moment found ourselves in the middle of the kraal. Day was but just beginning to break; and by the faint light I could discover only a few straw-mats, bent each between two sticks, into a semicircular form; but our ears were stunned with a horrid scream like the war-whoop of savages; the shrieking of women and the cries of children proceeded from every side. I rode up with the commandant and another farmer, both of whom fired upon the kraal. I immediately expressed to the former my very great surprise that he, of all others, should have been the first to break a condition which he had solemnly promised to observe, and that I had expected from him a very different kind of conduct. "Good God!" he exclaimed, "have you "not seen a shower of arrows falling among us?" I certainly had seen neither arrows nor people, but had heard enough to pierce the hardest heart; and

I peremptorily insisted, that neither he nor any of his party should fire another shot. In justification of their conduct, they began to search on the ground for the arrows, a search in which they were encouraged to continue, in order to give the poor wretches a little time to scramble away among the detached fragments of rocks and the shrubbery that stood on the side of the heights. On their promises I could place no sort of dependence, knowing that, like true sportsmen when game was sprung, they could not withhold their fire. Of this I was presently convinced by the report of a musket on the opposite side of the hill; and, on riding round the point, I perceived a Bosjesman lying dead upon the ground. It appeared that as one of our party, who could speak their language, was endeavouring to prevail upon the savages to come down from the heights, this Bosjesman had stolen close to him behind a rock, and was taking deliberate aim with his drawn bow, which another of the colonists perceiving, levelled his musket and shot him dead. It had been hoped the affair would happily have been accomplished without the shedding of human blood, and that the views of the expedition would have met with no interruption from an accident of such a nature. They soon perceived, however, that there was no attempt to pursue them up the heights, which could easily have been done; but that, on the contrary, the party had laid down their arms, and turned their horses out to graze. Upon this, in a short space of time, several little children came down upon the plain. Among these we distributed some biscuits and other trifles, and then suffered them to return: presently afterwards the women and young girls, to the number of thirty or forty, came towards us, not without symptoms of fear. These being treated in the same manner, were sent

back to desire their husbands would also come down in order to receive a present of tobacco. The men, however, had less confidence in the Christians than the women. They hovered a long time round the summit of the hill, doubting what step they should take; and the women had gone and returned, at least a dozen times, before they were able to prevail upon one man to descend; and when at last he ventured to come down, he approached us half-laughing, half-crying, trembled and acted just like a frightened child. A large piece of tobacco was immediately given to him, and he was sent back to his companions to let them know there was also a present for each of them. Three others mustered resolution to come down to us, but no more chose to venture themselves. The manner indeed in which their village was attacked, was certainly not calculated to inspire them with much confidence. On the contrary, it was so directly hostile, as perfectly to justify their shooting a volley of arrows among us, which was afterwards found to be the case, as the commandant had asserted. The conclusion of the business, however, must have appeared to them very different from what, on former occasions, they had always experienced, when those who escaped from immediate death were incessantly pursued and fired upon, and their wives and children seized and carried away into slavery. In this instance they were well treated, and left at full liberty to remain with us or to depart. The women all staid behind; but three of the men accompanied us to the waggons, where they continued for several days. We had wished to speak with the captain or chief of the horde, but they assured us there was no such person; that every one was master of his own family, and acted entirely without control, being at liberty to remain with or quit the society, as it might best suit them.

Little satisfaction could be obtained from those who returned with us to the waggons. They insisted on their innocence, by asserting that their horde, so long as they had composed a part of it, had never committed depredations on the colonists, but had always remained about the spot we found them, where they subsisted by the chase, and upon the roots of the earth. Appearances certainly were much in their favour; no bones nor horns of animals were found near the horde; no skins but those of young elands, springboks, tigers, and jackals. One woman in the whole party had a single sheep's skin thrown over her shoulders, which was very industriously pointed out by the farmers as a proof of their having suffered from this horde.

Before the men were sent away from the waggons, a large present was made to each of tobacco, beads, knives, flints, and steels; and they were desired to tell all their countrymen they should happen to see, that whenever they should desist from stealing the cattle of the colonists, and should come to any of the farm-houses without bow and arrows, or other weapons, and say they were in want, as many or more sheep should be given to them than they could possibly obtain by plunder: that our present journey into their country was for no other intention than to give them an opportunity of putting a final stop to all expeditions against them, if, by a change of conduct, they were inclined to avail themselves of it; and they were assured that not a single shot would have been fired upon their horde, had they not first discharged their arrows upon the farmers. Having remained with us very contentedly for a few days, they returned to their kraal, highly pleased with the treatment they had met with, and with the presents they had received.

The horde or kraal consisted of five-and-twenty huts, each made of a small grass-mat bent into a semicircle, and fastened down between two sticks; open before, but closed behind with a second mat. They were about three feet high and four feet wide, and the ground in the middle was dug out like the nest of an ostrich; a little grass strewed in this hollow served as their bed, in which they seemed to have lain coiled round in the manner of some quadrupeds. It appeared that it was customary for the elderly men to have two wives, one old and past child-bearing, and the other young; that no degree of consanguinity prevented a matrimonial connection, except between brothers and sisters, parents and children. One of these miserable huts served for a whole family. The population of the horde was calculated to amount to about a hundred and fifty persons. They possessed no sort of animals except dogs, which, unlike those of the Kaffers, were remarkably fat. They appeared to be of a small cur-kind, with long-pointed heads not unlike that of the common jackal. The high condition in which these creatures were found, seemed very difficult to be accounted for. They have neither milk nor animal food to eat. The only viands we found in the huts, were a few small bulbous roots, the eggs or larvæ of white ants, and the dried larvæ of locusts. The peasantry say that the dogs of Bosjesmans exist almost wholly upon the last article, the great plenty of which, in the present year, may account for the fatness of these animals.

The men were entirely naked, and most of the women nearly so. Their only covering was a belt of springbok's skin, with the part that was intended to hang before cut into long threads like those before mentioned to be worn by some of the Hot-

tentot women; but the filaments were so small and thin, that they answered no sort of use as a covering; nor indeed did the females, either old or young, seem to feel any sense of shame in appearing before us naked. Whether in the confusion and hurry they had scrambled among the rocks before they had time to adjust this their only dress, or whether they were indifferent about concealing any particular part of their bodies, their aprons happened to be very carelessly put on. The fringed part of some was hanging behind; of others, on the exterior part of the thigh; and some had fallen down as low as the knee. Yet they were not entirely without some notions of finery. A few had caps made of the skins of asses, in form not unlike helmets; and bits of copper, or shells, or beads, were hanging in the neck, suspended from their little curling tufts of hair. All the men had the cartilege of the nose bored, through which they wore a piece of wood or a porcupine's quill.

Whether considered as to their persons, turn of mind, or way of life, the Bosjesmans are certainly a most extraordinary race of people. In their persons they are extremely diminutive. The tallest of the men measured only four feet nine inches, and the tallest woman four feet four inches. About four feet six inches is said to be the middle size of the men, and four feet that of the women. One of these, that had several children, measured only three feet nine inches. Their colour, their hair, and the general turn of their features, evidently denote a common origin with the Hottentots, though the latter, in point of personal appearance, has the advantage by many degrees. The Bosjesmans, indeed, are amongst the ugliest of all human beings. The flat nose, high cheek-bones, prominent chin,

and concave visage, partake much of the apeish character, which their keen eye, always in motion, tends not to diminish. The upper lid of this organ, as in that of the Chinese, is rounded into the lower on the side next the nose, and forms not an angle, as is the case in the eye of an European. It is perhaps from this circumstance that they are known in the colony under the name of *Cineeze*, or Chinese Hottentots. Their bellies are uncommonly protuberant, and their backs hollow; but their limbs seem to be in general well turned and proportioned. Their activity is incredibly great. The klip-springing antelope can scarcely excel them in leaping from rock to rock; and they are said to be so swift, that, on rough ground, or up the sides of mountains, horsemen have no chance with them. And, as the means of increasing their speed in the chase, or when pursued by an enemy, the men had adopted a custom, which was sufficiently remarkable, of pushing the testicles to the upper part of the root of the penis, where they seemed to remain as firmly and conveniently as if placed there by nature. It is unnecessary to add, that such an operation must necessarily be performed at an early period of life.

Curious as this custom appeared to be, it was less a subject of remark than an extraordinary character that distinguished the other sex from the women of most nations. The well-known story of the Hottentot women possessing an unusual appendage to those parts that are seldom exposed to view, which belonged not to the sex in general, is perfectly true with regard to the Bosjesmans. The horde we had met with, possessed it to a woman; and, without the least offence to modesty, there was no difficulty in satisfying curiosity. It appeared on examination to be an elongation of the nymphæ, or interior la-

bia, more or less extended, according to the age or habit of the person. In infancy it is just apparent, and in general may be said to increase in length with age. The longest that was measured, somewhat exceeded five inches, which was in a subject of a middle age. Many were said to have them much longer. These protruded nymphæ, collapsed and pendent, appear at first view to belong to the other sex. Their colour is that of livid blue, inclining to a reddish tint, not unlike the excrescence on the beak of a turkey, which indeed may serve to convey a tolerable good idea of the whole appearance both as to colour, shape, and size. The interior lips or nymphæ in European subjects which are corrugated or plaited, lose entirely that part of their character when brought out in the Hottentot, and become perfectly smooth. Though in the latter state they may possess none of those stimulating qualities for which some anatomists have supposed Nature to have formed them, they have at least the advantage of serving as a protection against violence from the other sex, it seeming next to impossible for a man to cohabit with one of these women without her consent, or even assistance.

Nature seems to have studied how to make this pigmy race disgusting; though a certain French traveller has thought fit to exculpate Nature on this point, by asserting the above-mentioned conformation to be entirely the effect of art. The testimony of the people themselves, who have no other idea but that the whole human race is so formed, is sufficient to contradict such a supposition; but many other proofs might be adduced to show, that the assertion is without any foundation in truth. Numbers of Bosjesmans' women are now in the colony, who were taken from their mothers when infants, and brought up by the farmers, who, from the day

of their captivity, have never had any intercourse whatsoever with their countrymen, nor know, except from report, to what tribe or nation they belong; yet all these have the same conformation of the parts naturally, and without any forced means. The story of their perpending pieces of stone in order to draw down the interior labia, is still popular in Bruyntjes Hoogté, where the author above alluded to received it. It was here that he spent the greatest part of his time with his Narina; for at that time a tribe of Ghonaquas lay on a plain bordering on the Great Fish river. The visit of this gentleman is still very well remembered there, though he takes care to suppress any mention of the country being inhabited by colonists, which, he supposed, would have diminished the interest he intended to excite. It may be observed, that the people of Bruyntjes Hoogté know as little of the Bosjesmans as these do of the English, the communication being pretty much the same. The same author says it was from a Hottentot woman he made his drawing. If the print given in his book has been copied from that drawing, it should seem to have been a study rather from his own imagination than from nature.

The elongated nymphæ are found in all Hottentot women, only they are shorter in those of the colony, seldom exceeding three inches, and in many subjects appearing only as a projecting orifice or elliptical tube of an inch, or less, in length. In the *bastaard* it ceases to appear; a proof that a connection with different nations counteracts the predisposition to such a conformation.

It is not, however, to the southern angle of Africa alone that the same predisposition for the elongation of the nymphæ is confined. The physical causes

that tend to the production of so extraordinary an effect, operated in parts of Egypt, situated under the same and opposite parallels of latitude as the Hottentot country. It was here, however, considered as a disease, an appearance so deformed and disgusting, that those who were troubled with it, were glad to undergo the violent pain of the actual cautery in order to get rid of it.

The great curvature of the spine inwards, and extended posteriors, are characteristic of the whole Hottentot race; but in some of the small Bosjesmans they are carried to a most extravagant degree. If the letter S be considered as one expression of the line of beauty to which degrees of approximation are admissible, these women are entitled to the first rank in point of form. A section of the body, from the breast to the knee, forms really the shape of the above letter. The projection of the posterior part of the body, in one subject, measured five inches and a half from a line touching the spine. This protuberance consisted of fat, and, when the woman walked, had the most ridiculous appearance imaginable, every step being accompanied with a quivering and tremulous motion, as if two masses of jelly were attached behind.

When we reflect on the Hottentot nation, which, with all its tribes, occupies, as it were, a point only on a great continent; when we consider them as a people differing in so extraordinary a manner from every other race of men upon it, or upon the face of the whole globe even, the natural formation of their persons, their colour, language, manners, and way of life, being peculiar to themselves, conjecture is at a loss to suggest from whence they could have derived their origin. Except in the extreme

flatness of the nose, and the short brushy hair, they approach nearest in colour, and in the construction of the features, to the Chinese, how singular soever it may seem to trace a likeness between the most civilized and ingenious, and one of the lowest of the human species. If it be admitted, with several well-informed missionaries, that the Egyptians and the Chinese were originally the same people, and the arguments are certainly strong in favour of the supposition, notwithstanding the many learned and ingenious objections stated by the philosopher of Berlin, there would be no difficulty in conceiving some of the numerous tribes of people who inhabited the vicinity of the Nile, to have found their way to the utmost limit of the same continent. Indeed, from all the ancient accounts that have been preserved of the Egyptians and Ethiopians, it would appear that the real Hottentots, or Bosjesmans, were the people intended to be described. In their general physical character they bear a strong resemblance to the Pigmies and Troglodytes, two tribes who are said to have dwelt in the neighbourhood of the Nile. The character drawn by Diodorus Siculus, of some of the Ethiopian nations, agrees exactly with that of the Bosjesmans. A species of brutality is stated by him to prevail in all their manners and customs; their voices were shrill, dissonant, and scarcely human; their language almost inarticulate; and they wore no clothing. The Ethiopian soldiers, when called upon to defend themselves, or to face an enemy, stuck their poisoned arrows within a fillet bound round the head, which, projecting like so many rays, formed a kind of crown. The Bosjesmans do exactly the same thing; and they place them in this manner for the double purpose of expeditious shooting, and of striking terror into the minds of their enemies.

The whole of the Hottentot country, comprehending all the different tribes of this people, is limited to the thirty-second degree of latitude on the east coast, and the twenty-fifth on the west. Beyond the line, connecting these two points, the various Kaffer tribes occupy a broad belt quite across the continent; and no two people can differ more than the Bosjesmans and the Kaffers, having no one agreement either in their physical or their moral character.

The Bosjesman, though in every respect a Hottentot, yet in his turn of mind differs very widely from those who live in the colony. In his disposition he is lively and cheerful; in his person active. His talents are far above mediocrity; and, averse to idleness, they are seldom without employment.—Confined generally to their hovels by day, for fear of being surprised and taken by the farmers, they sometimes dance on moon-light nights from the setting to the rising of the sun. They are said to be particularly joyful at the approach of the first thunder-storm after the winter, which they consider as so infallible a token of the summer having commenced, that they tear in pieces their skin-coverings, throw them in the air, and dance for several successive nights. The small circular trodden places around their huts, indicated their fondness for this amusement. His cheerfulness is the more extraordinary, as the morsel he procures to support existence is earned with danger and fatigue. He neither cultivates the ground nor breeds cattle; and his country yields few natural productions that serve for food. The bulbs of the iris, and a few gramineous roots of a bitter and pungent taste, are all that the vegetable kingdom affords him. By the search for these, the whole surface of the plains near the horde

was scratched. Another article of his food is the larvæ of ants. Whether the soil of the grassy plains, near the Sea-Cow river, be too rich for the nature of these insects, or whether they are kept under by the Bosjesmans, I will not take upon me to say; but an ant-hill, so very common in most parts of Africa, is here a rare object. Holes now and then occurred, over which the hills of the insect, demolished by this people, once had stood; but they were not very numerous. A third article, the larvæ of locusts, he can occasionally obtain without much trouble; but the procuring of the other must cost him no small pains.

Marks of their industry appeared in every part of the country, in their different plans of taking game: one was by making deep holes in the ground and covering them over with sticks and earth; another by piling stones on each other in rows, with openings or interruptions in such places as it was intended the game should pass, and where the hunter could conveniently lie in ambush to strike the animals with his poisoned spears, or shoot them with his arrows. In this manner were lines continued across the plains and mouths of defiles for several miles. Sometimes, instead of stones, were placed rows of sticks, with black ostrich feathers tied to the ends, as being more effectual in turning game towards the spot where they wished them to pass.

When all these means of subsistence fail them, and they are certainly very precarious, they are driven to the necessity of hazarding a toilsome and dangerous expedition of plunder into the colony. Such a mode of life naturally leads to habits of cruelty. The disposition of the Hottentot race is mild and manageable in the highest degree, and by gentle

usage may be moulded into any shape; but the treatment of the farmers towards them has been so very flagitious, that their cruelty even admits of palliation. Though in the eye of political justice it may be considered as a crime for a starving family, driven by imperious want to the necessity of taking the property of another who has perhaps more than he can possibly use, yet in the law of nature the offence is venial: but the Bosjesmans for their conduct have not only the plea of nature and humanity, but also that of retribution. They were driven out of their own country, their children seized and carried into slavery, by the people on whom they now commit their depredations, and on whom they naturally take every occasion of exercising their revenge. But that their studied barbarity should be extended to every living creature that appertains to the farmers, indicates a very altered disposition from that of their nation at large. Should they seize a Hottentot guarding his master's cattle, not contented with putting him to immediate death, they torture him by every means of cruelty that their invention can frame, as drawing out his bowels, tearing off his nails, scalping, and other acts equally savage. Even the poor animals they steal are treated in a most barbarous and unfeeling manner: driven up the steep sides of mountains, they remain there without any kind of food or water till they are either killed for use, or drop for want of the means of supporting nature.

The condition to which this people has been reduced, has entirely subdued that timid and pusillanimous mind which characterizes the Hottentot.—When a horde is surrounded by the farmers, and little chance is perceived by them of effecting an escape, they will fight it out most furiously so long

as a man shall be left alive. It frequently happens on such occasions, that a party will volunteer the *forlorn hope*, by throwing themselves in the midst of the colonists in order to create confusion, and to give to their countrymen, concealed among the rocks or in the long grass, at the expense of their own lives, an opportunity of exercising more effectually their mortal weapons upon their enemies, and at the same time to facilitate the escape of their wives and children.

Their plundering expeditions are conducted not without system. If, in carrying off their booty, they should chance to be pursued, they always divide; one party to drive away the cattle, while the other continues to harass the pursuers; and, when the peasantry prove too many for them, they stab and maim with poisoned weapons the whole herd. On all such plundering expeditions, they carry, in addition to their bows and arrows, lances that resemble the Kaffers' hassagai, but of a much smaller size, and always dipt in poison. Their bows are remarkably small; and, in the hands of any one but of a Bosjesman, would be entirely useless. From the earliest infancy they accustom themselves to the use of the bow. All the little boys who came to us at the kraal, carried their bows and small quivers of arrows. A complete quiver contains about seventy or eighty, made like those of the Hottentot that have already been noticed; and, in addition to these, a few small brushes to lay on the poison; pieces of iron, red ochre, leg-bones of ostriches cut in lengths and rounded, and two little sticks of hard wood to produce fire: this is done by placing one horizontally on a piece of withered grass, and whirling the other vertically between the hands, with the point acting in a hollow place made in the surface of the

former. In a few seconds of time the velocity and friction set the grass in a blaze.

Miserable as the life of a Bosjesman appears to be, it is perhaps in reality not more so than that of most savage tribes. He has no invidious object of comparison to place against his condition. Universal equality prevails in his horde. When one feasts, they all partake, and when one hungers, they all equally suffer. "They take no thought for the morrow." They have no sort of management nor economy with regard to provisions. With them it is either a feast or a famine. When successful in bringing to the horde a herd of cattle, they slay them in such numbers, that the kraal soon becomes a mass of putrefaction, and the whole air tainted with the smell. The number of vultures that are attracted by the remains of the dead carcases, are frequently the means of discovering to the colonists the kraals of Bosjesmans. Like these voracious birds, they are equally filthy and gluttonous. The three who accompanied us to our waggons, had a sheep given to them about five in the evening, which was entirely consumed by them before the noon of the following day. They continued, however, to eat all night, without sleep and without intermission, till they had finished the whole animal. After this their lank bellies were distended to such a degree, that they looked less like human creatures than before. Accustomed to food of a strong and pungent quality, simple water seemed to have no relish for them: they prepared a beverage that was excessively disgusting: having cut the throat of the sheep, they opened the belly to let the blood run among the entrails; then cutting these with a knife, and pouring in a quantity of water, they stirred up all together, and drank the nauseous mixture with an appetite

that sufficiently showed it to be suited to their taste.

It did not appear that they were in the habit of applying unctuous substances to the body any farther than wiping their greasy hands on their skin; but the hair and faces of many of them had been rubbed with red ochre after the manner of the Kaffers, and a few had the face painted black, in the shape of a mark: this they do with the kernel of a small nut burnt in the fire. The oil expressed from this nut is considered by them as a preventive against stiffness in the joints, and by the colonists as the best application for rheumatic complaints. Indeed the oil bears a very strong resemblance to that called cajapoota, which has obtained a high character of being useful in the same disorder. The Hottentot name of the plant is *kai*; and the nut resembles the seed of the tea-shrub.

The constitutions of this pigmy race are much stronger, and their lives of longer duration, than those of the Hottentots. Many instances of longevity are found among those who live with the peasantry. In every sickness, of what kind soever, it is usual with them to take off the extreme joints of the fingers, beginning with the little finger of the left hand, as the least useful. This operation is performed under the idea, that the disease will run out with the effusion of blood.

It is customary with them to inter their dead, and, like the Hottentots, to cover the graves with piles of stones. Some of these were so large, and on grassy plains where not a stone was naturally to be found, that the amassing of them together must have occasioned a very considerable degree of labour.

The temper of a Bosjesman is widely different from that of a Hottentot who lives in the colony. The latter, for a life of indolence, would barter all that he possessed in the world; a state of inactivity would be to the former intolerable. The powers of the mind, in one, are languid, and difficultly brought into action; in the other, they seem capable of great exertion. Their mechanical skill appeared in their arrows, which were finished with great neatness; in the baskets placed in the rivers for the purpose of taking fish, ingeniously contrived, and very well executed; in the mats of grass, of which their huts were composed; and in their imitations of different animals, designed on the smooth faces of the rocks. Being questioned with respect to these drawings, it appeared that they were generally the work of a numerous tribe of their countrymen that lived a little to the northward, on the other side of a very large river.

The nature of their language is the same as that of the Hottentots, though they are not able to understand each other. In the latter, the action of the tongue against the roof of the mouth, or the teeth, is seldom used on more than one syllable of a word. In the language of the Bosjesman, there is scarcely a syllable enunciated without it; and this action is performed by them much more forcibly than by the Hottentots. Notwithstanding the difficulty for an European to acquire such a language, several of the Sneuwbergers speak it as fluently as the natives, from their having been committed, in their infancy, to the care of Bosjesmans' nurses.

It were greatly to be wished, that the peasantry would see the policy of putting an end to their expeditions against this miserable people, and adopt

in their place a lenient mode of treatment. They might not, perhaps, succeed in reclaiming them at once from their rooted habits of life; but their hatred towards the colonists, which aims at their lives, might certainly be abated. The first step towards it would be to abolish the inhuman practice of carrying into captivity their women and children. This, in fact, is the "lethalis arundo" that rankles in their breasts, and excites that spirit of vengeance which they perpetually denounce against the Christians. The condition of those who are made prisoners by the farmers, is, in fact, much worse than that of slavery; for, not being transferable property, they have no claims upon their interest. An attempt indeed was lately made at Graaff Reynet to induce the government to grant them leave to sell such Bosjesmans as should be taken prisoners, on condition of ten rixdollars being paid into the treasury for every such slave sold. This humane proposal, "made," as it is stated in the records, "for the "purpose of rousing the military ardor of the farm-"ers, which of late was observed to have abated," was unanimously carried in the Council, but did not receive the sanction of the Government at the Cape.

Forty years ago, it appears from living testimony, the Bosjesmans frequented the colony boldly and openly, begged, and stole, and were troublesome, just as the Kaffers now are; but they never attempted the life of any one. They proceeded not to this extremity until the government had unwisely and unjustly suffered the peasantry to exercise an unlimited power over the lives of those who were taken prisoners. It failed, at the same time, to fix any bounds to the extent of the expeditions made against them, which certainly ought not to go be-

yond the limits of the colony. Nothing could be more unwarrantable, because cruel and unjust, than the attack made by our party upon the kraal; and the only palliation it could admit of is the consideration of the end it was meant to answer. The poor wretches were peaceably sleeping under their humble covering of mats, and in the heart of their own country, far removed from the boundary of the colony. The inroads of these savages would much more effectually be checked by charging them boldly, whenever they should be known to have passed the limits, but not to pursue them into their own country. This, however, would not answer the object of the farmer, which is that of procuring children. To attend his numerous flocks and herds, he must have many people; and Hottentots are now so scarce, that a sufficient number is not to be had. These, too, must be paid wages; but the poor Bosjesman has nothing except his sheep-skin and his meat. The fatigues, however, that the peasantry undergo in their long expeditions against them, are sometimes very great. They are frequently, for many days together, without a drop of water, enduring hunger, want of rest, and the vicissitudes of heat and cold. Many suffer from the wounds of poisoned arrows, which, if not mortal, frequently, by injudicious treatment, bring on lingering complaints, of which they never recover. Some of them are prudent enough to carry with them cupping vessels to draw out the poison, and sweet oil to wash the wounds, and a quantity of vinegar to drink; but the greatest part depend entirely on the application of the snake-stone, which has been noticed before to be only a piece of burnt bone. The Hottentots generally wash their poisoned wounds with a mixture of urine and gunpowder; and it is observed that these people seldom die except wounded very severely.

On the evening of the thirtieth we joined the waggons that had proceeded along the bank of the Sea-Cow river to that part where it passed through an opening in a cluster of hills, which opening was called the *first poort*. Here the late Colonel Gordon, who had proceeded beyond the Governor, met with an accident which also put an end to his journey: his horse fell with him into one of the deep holes made by the Bosjesmans for taking sea-cows, and was staked. From the north side of the Snowy mountains to these hills, there was scarcely an inequality in the surface of the country. Here it began to be broken; and blue mountains appeared in the horizon to the northward. The following day we reached the second poort or pass, through which also the Sea-Cow river bent its course. The hills now began to increase very considerably in height, and their summits were capped with a stratum of sand-stone. They were also lengthened out into a continued chain, so as to prevent the possibility of waggons passing to the northward.

Though none of the party had ever been beyond the entrance of the second poort, yet they willingly accepted the proposal of making a day's journey within it, following the course of the river as far as it might be practicable or adviseable to proceed. The kloof we found to be in general so very narrow, and the river serpentized so much from side to side, passing close under the steep rocky points, that we were obliged to pass it a hundred times, and had almost abandoned the hope of making much progress, when we fell into a large beaten track made by the hippopotami or sea-cows. This carried us, without further interruption, through reeds and shrubbery, and shallow parts of the river, to the very end of the kloof, which we computed to be about

fifteen miles from the entrance, where we had left our waggons. Here also was the termination of the Sea-Cow river; its tranquil waters formed a confluence with another river of prodigious size, whose rapid stream rolled over the rocky bed a vast volume of muddy water. The current of this river set to the north-westward. Though there had not been a cloud in the sky since we left Graaff Reynet, very heavy rain must have fallen in some part of the country through which it flowed; for it was evident from the wreck of trees, and plants, and grass, yet green, thrown up near the banks of the river, that the water had subsided twelve or thirteen feet. It was now, at this place, about four hundred yards in width, and very deep. The peasantry had no name for it but that of the *Groot*, or Great river; but from the magnitude and the direction of the current, there could be no doubt of its being the same which empties itself on the western coast, between the two tribes of people called the Great and the Little Namaquas, and to which Colonel Gordon there gave the name of the Orange river. In point of size, and bulk of water, all the rivers of the colony, taken collectively, would not be equal to it.

The banks were fringed with the Karroo mimosa, the willow of Babylon, and the *rhus viminalis* Vast numbers of the hippopotamus were snorting and blowing in every part of the river, loud as the torrent that roared among the rocks. Under the shade of the trees, and on the reedy banks near the mouth of the Sea-Cow river, were the beds where these enormous animals had been playing and rolling, on venturing forth from their watery abodes. The description that the author of the Book of Job has put into the mouth of the Almighty, of the behe-

moth, is poetic, grand, and figurative; and it is more than probable that the hippopotamus was the animal alluded to:—" Behold now behemoth which " I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox: His " bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are " like bars of iron: He lieth under the shady trees, " in the covert of the reed and fens. The shady " trees cover him with their shadow; the willows " of the brook compass him about. Behold he " drinketh up a river; he trusteth that he can draw " up Jordan into his mouth. He taketh it with his " eyes; his nose pierceth through snares."

In the rocky mountains of the long pass, that brought us to the river, were great numbers of klipspringers and reeboks, and of a species of monkey of a grizzled greenish tint, with a straight tail, a third longer than the body, and black at the extremity; a horizontal white line across the forehead, just above the eyes; cheeks bearded with whitish hair. But the grandest object that occurred in the kloof was a plant of the lilliaceous tribe, with undulate ensiform leaves; the flower-stalk was six feet high, and an inch in diameter, supporting an umbel that consisted of twenty to thirty flowrets; the petals on the outside, striped with red and white, were within of a clear snowy whiteness; the antheræ were bright crimson.

On returning to the waggons, we directed our course easterly, and rounded the mountains of the above-mentioned kloof, by which means we approached the Orange river, where, with an easy current, it flowed through a level part of the country. We soon found, however, that it was impossible for the waggons to proceed far in this direction, and that in very few places they could be brought

near the banks of the river. We therefore took to our horses, and followed the windings of the river four days, in the hope of meeting with a ford where it might be passed by the waggons. The first day the water had subsided near two feet perpendicularly, and it continued to fall for three days; but the fourth day put an end to our hopes of crossing, by a sudden swelling of the water to a greater height than when we had first approached it. The mountains also, among which it pushed its current, began now to be so rugged, that the banks were seldom accessible even on horseback. Nothing, therefore, remained for us but to return to the waggons, and abandoning the idea of penetrating farther to the northward, we contented ourselves with striking off in the opposite direction towards the Kaffer country.

The general breadth of this river, when free from inundations, appeared to be about three hundred yards. In many places it extended to five hundred, and in others was contracted to two hundred yards. The volume of water was immense, and, in the narrow parts, forced its way with great rapidity. Yet from this place to the embouchure on the western coast, supposing it to be the Orange river, the distance was not less than five hundred miles. On each side of the river, the surface of the country was naked and barren as the Karroo, and infinitely more disagreeable, being loose sand; but at the distance of a couple of miles on the south side, were plains well covered with herbage. In several places the inundations had extended beyond a mile from the river, as was apparent by the wreck of large trees, roots, shrubs, and ridges of sand, lying in a long continued line. The elevation of the ground, at such points of inundation, could not

be less than thirty to forty feet above the level of the river at its ordinary state.

The Orange river, like the Nile, has its periodical inundations, and, as well as that river, might be made, by the help of canals, to fertilize a vast extent of adjoining country. The Orange also has its cataracts. One of these made a prodigious roaring noise, not far from one of the places where we halted; but it was not approachable without a great deal of fatigue and trouble. It is a remark that cannot fail to obtrude itself on every traveller in Southern Africa, who may have attended to the accounts that have been given of the northern parts of the same continent, that the analogy between them is very close. Egypt and the colony of the Cape lie under the same parallels of latitude: they have the same kind of climate, the same soil, the same saline waters: they both abound in natron; and the same plants and the same animals are common to both. Egypt, without the Nile, would be a desart waste, producing only a few saline and succulent plants like those of the Great Karroo, where rain full as seldom falls as in the former country; and the sandy soil of the Cape, with the assistance of water, is as fertile as that of Egypt possibly can be. The rains in the Abyssinian mountains generally begin in May, and cause the inundations of the Nile to take place in June, continuing to the month of September. The rains in the Great mountains beyond the Kaffers and the Tambookies, along the feet of which the Orange river runs, collecting their tributary streams in its passage, commence in November, and cause the inundations to take place, towards the Namaqua country, in December, corresponding thus exactly with the former, both countries being nearly at the same distance from the

equator, but on contrary sides. The same singular peculiarity has been observed in the conformation of the Egyptian women that pervades the whole of the Hottentot nation. That extraordinary animal, the camelopardalis, is said to be an inhabitant of Ethiopia, nearer to the Line than Egypt; and it is first met with in Southern Africa, beyond the Orange river, which is also nearer to the Line than any part of the colony of the Cape. Many other analogies might be drawn; but these are more than sufficient to establish the opinion of a striking resemblance existing between the two countries.

The Orange river, at this time, though far from being full, exhibited a very grand object; but in its low state, when the water is clear, it must be exceedingly beautiful. In the level parts of the country, through which its smooth and easy current ran over pebbly beds, these were composed entirely of stones that were not common, nor were many of them wanting either in being curious or beautiful. Among these were opals, carnelians, chalcedonies, and agates of every form and colour, figured, plain, and striped, zoned and stalactitical; not thinly scattered here and there, but in such quantities that, judging by those few banks which were uncovered with water, a waggon-load might be collected in a few hours. These beds consisted generally of round and oval pebbles, some having a black ground, others light brown, and others chocolate colour.—These were inlaid with other small, white, quartzy pebbles, forming, on the smooth surfaces of the former circles, stripes, and irregular spots and lines. They appeared to be of that description of aggregated stones called, by some French mineralogists, variolites, and to which Mr. Kirwan has proposed to give the general name of porphyrites. The

white parts grew, as it were, into the coloured base, and adhered to it so closely as not to be easily separated. It is remarkable enough that this should be the only river in Southern Africa, at least between it and the Cape, in which stones of this nature are found. According to the relations of Vaillant and Patterson, the agates extend down the bed of the river as far as its mouth, on the western coast; but neither of these authors make any mention of the spotted stones which, had they been there, must have obtruded themselves on their notice, being no less singular and beautiful than they were numerous; whole banks were entirely composed of them and the others above mentioned. They occurred of all sizes, from a line to a foot in diameter, generally rounded and smoothly polished by attrition in their passage down the river. The rocky banks were masses that apparently were composed of clay and mica, containing also a considerable portion of the oxyd of iron. The angles of these were likewise rounded off, and their surfaces worn smooth by the action of the current. From alternate exposure to water and the sun, they had contracted a glossy black colour, bearing a resemblance to black, glazed, earthen-ware. The mountains that were contiguous to the river had generally their summits of grey quartz; under this a stratum of iron-stone, then sand-stone, and lastly slate. The strata were laid horizontally, or very nearly so.

The fishing-tackle of the Bosjesmans, lying in several places on the banks of the river, and in good order, showed plainly that many of them were in the neighbourhood, and had certainly been disturbed in their occupation by our party. They consisted of baskets made of osiers, and the stems of reeds alternately worked in: one being white, and the

other dark brown, gave them a very pretty appearance. The workmanship was firm and neat, and the contrivance sufficiently clever, being of the same nature as those wicker-baskets used in Europe for the like purpose. We found also several harpoons of wood, some pointed with bone, and fixed to ropes made apparently of some sort of grass. Deep holes were dug along the side of the river in vast numbers, and most of them were covered over with so much care that they were not easily discoverable, which made it dangerous to ride along the sea-cow paths. One of our horses fell into a hole near nine feet deep, which, fortunately, had no stake in it, otherwise he must inevitably have been killed.

In what part soever we approached the river, hippopotami were snorting and playing in vast numbers. Of these animals our party killed four in one day. They were all very lean, a circumstance that was attributed to the locusts having devoured every green plant for a considerable distance from the banks of the river. A young one was taken out of the womb of a female, perfectly formed in every part except the teeth and tusks. Though now only seven inches long, the same animal, if not destroyed, would, in the course of time, most probably have attained the enormous weight of three or four thousand pounds.

Near the end of the last day's journey, along the banks of the river, was a wood of tall mimosas.—The branches of these were loaded with many thousands of the nests of the locust-eating thrush; and, not far from the same place, we crossed the only troop of young locusts that had occurred in the vicinity of the river, the herbage, as was above noticed, being there already consumed. This troop

covered a plot of ground at least a hundred yards in width, and five miles in length. Its march was directed towards the river, which it intended to cross. Close to the water's edge these creatures were heaped together in clumps of five or six inches deep.—Myriads had already entered the water, and were carried down the stream.

On the fifth of December we left the river, and, turning off to the southward, travelled over a flat country of a strong clayey soil, well covered with fine grass, but destitute of wood or bushes, and ill supplied with water. Springs here and there occurred; and these were easily discovered by the patches of tall reeds that surrounded them. Elands and gnoos, hares and partridges, were very plentiful, and none, except the second, difficult to procure. Most of the antelope tribe may be nearest approached on the plains, about one or two o'clock, when the heat of the sun is greatest, either from their being then in a state of languor, or from their eyes being dazzled by the strong light, which renders them incapable of judging of distances. The thermometer stood at 88° in the shade, about the middle of the day. For eight or ten days past its greatest height had been 84°. The weather almost constantly calm, with a cloudless sky.

The following day, after ten hours travelling directly south, over a level country, brought us to the highest ridge of mountains that run across the southern angle of Africa. It might be considered as a continuation of the Compass-berg before noticed, though there are several interruptions in the interjacent chain. At this part it had the name of Zuureberg, or the Sour Mountain. The waters that issue from its sides, run in opposite directions. Those

that take a northerly course fall into the Orange river; and the united streamlets, flowing to the southward, become at length the Great Fish river, which divides the colony from the Kaffer country.

Early on the morning of the seventh, in consequence of one of the party having asserted that some years ago he had met with the drawing of an unicorn in a kloof of the Zuure-berg, we set out upon an excursion across this mountain. Paintings we found, in several places, of a variety of animals, but none which bore the least resemblance to a quadruped with a single horn. Many of the peasantry had frequently assured me that unicorns were commonly found designed among the rest; but none of them as yet had been able to point out to me the drawing of such an animal, though we had visited several caverns in the Bosjesmans country for that purpose. If, however, we were disappointed in not finding the object that had been the occasion of the excursion, we were amply repaid for the inconvenience and fatigue of eight hours' exposure to the scorching rays of an unclouded sun, by a variety of other interesting subjects that were constantly occurring. In no part of the journey had been found such an assemblage of rare plants as grew on the sides of the Zuure-berg. The number and great variety of the geranium family, especially of that genus which, by a late botanical arrangement, has been named pelargonium, were truly astonishing. The *xeranthemum fulgidum*, with its brilliant yellow flowers, and the still more showy *speciosissimum*, were equally numerous; not less so many species of the everlasting gnaphalium. Two species of that very singular and beautiful plant, the *disa*, found also on Table mountain, decorated the margins of the springs upon the Zuure-berg. At the feet of

the mountain, we procured one of the most beautiful, and also one of the most disgusting quadrupeds that are perhaps to be found in the whole creation. The first, it would almost be unnecessary to add, was the zebra, which we shot in a troop consisting of six; and the latter was the bosch varke, or wild hog of Africa, described in the *Systema Naturæ*, under the name of *sus Ethiopicus*. This creature is not more ugly than it is vicious and cunning. The long ivory fangs that, like horns, project from its mouth, and bend upwards, make it dangerous to be approached, whilst its little eyes, placed near the top of its square forehead, and the fleshy bags hanging from each cheek like an additional pair of ears, gave it a very hideous and frightful appearance. A great variety of lizards were observed, and one in particular, in the agonies of death, reflected transient shades of colours that were remarkably beautiful. The permanent ones were cerulean blue and green, with a line down the back of dark blue and yellow spots; tail marked with waved lines orange and ferruginous; body muricated, eight inches long. Another species, about a foot in length, was entirely of a brilliant yellow. Cameleons were also plentiful, particularly of the small species peculiar to the Cape, the *pumila* of the *Systema Naturæ*. This reptile is supposed to be always found of the same colour with the body on which it may happen to rest. Though in general this, perhaps, may be the case, yet the rule does not always hold good. I have seen it remain black for many minutes, on a white ground, and white when placed upon a black hat. Previous to its assuming a change of colour, it makes a long inspiration, the body swelling out to twice its usual size; and, as this inflation subsides, the change of colour gradually takes place. The only permanent marks are two small dark lines passing along the

sides. The cameleons are characterized from the rest of the lizard tribe, by their perching on the extremities of the branches of shrubby plants, from whence, holding themselves fast by their prehensile tails, with outstretched tongue they catch the passing flies. Hence seems to have originated the idea that this class of reptiles lived upon air.

The zebra that had been shot was left at the foot of the hill until our return, when it was the intention to have taken off the skin. We had not been absent from it more than an hour, in which space of time it had been completely eviscerated by a troop of vultures, consisting of the condor, percnopterus, white crow, and the vulturine crow; yet in no part of the body was the skin broken, except that the hole in the neck, where the ball had entered, was a little enlarged. Out of this hole a great part of the entrails had been drawn. The animal was a female, and its full-grown foal had been dragged by the vultures more than half out of the vagina. It seems that the sacred bird of Egypt is a kind of caterer to the condor, and is employed in drawing the carcases of animals, whilst the other sits by "to prey on garbage."

In the evening we reached a farm-house, situated on the skirts of the colony, in the division of the Sea-Cow river and the Rhinosceros-berg, where, after a very long day's journey, our waggons also arrived. In this part of the country are still a number of families that, like the people of Sneuwberg, have withstood the attacks of the Bosjesmans, by keeping together and affording to each other mutual assistance. The wealth of the farmers here consists of sheep and horned cattle; all their crops were entirely destroyed by the locusts.

At this place the party that had accompanied us was discharged; but, as it was the intention to skirt the colony to the eastward, and pass through the deserted division of the Tarka, another party was selected from among the farmers of Agter Sneuwberg, as being best acquainted with this eastern part of the country. Six colonists and six Hottentots, in addition to our own strength, were deemed sufficient to enable us to perform this part of the journey with safety.

Directing our course to the south-eastward, we came to a chain of four salt-water lakes, lying one immediately after the other. Three of them were fully as large as, and one smaller than, that near Swart Kop's river; but there was very little water in any of them. The bottoms were covered with a crust of salt that in the thickest part did not exceed an inch. Immediately under the salt was a thin coating of red sand, and below the sand a stratum of soft impalpable blue clay two feet deep; the next three feet consisted of a coarse friable yellowish clay, containing small crystals of salt; under this was a small quantity of water, resting upon a covering of rotten purple slate half an inch thick; and below this a dry reddish-coloured soil that did not apparently contain a particle of salt. Close to the margin of the third salt-pan were several springs of clear water, having a bitter earthy taste; and along the rills that fell from these into the pan, grew tall reeds and rushes into the very centre among the salt. The others were entirely naked, without a bush or shrub on their banks. The surrounding country was also destitute of plants, and the surface was strewed over in many places with thin pellicles of salt. The quantity of game on the neighbouring plains, consisting chiefly of elands and

springboks, was to us a sufficient inducement to pitch our tents near the salt-pans; but we were disturbed the whole night by the roaring of lions.

Continuing our route to the eastward, on the tenth we entered the division of the Tarka, under the point of a lofty mountain called the Bambos-berg, which also forms a part of the highest ridge that crosses the continent near the southern angle of Africa. The Bambos-berg is a double range, and is completely impassable either with waggons or on horseback. In order to have got beyond them with horses, it would have been necessary to return to the northward, and to cross the Zuure-berg. To the eastward, no passage over them has yet been discovered in any of the expeditions that, with different views, have been made through Kaffer-land. The country, therefore, behind the Bambos-berg, at the feet of which the Orange river flows, may be considered as very little known, and on that account it was a subject of no small regret to some of the party to be denied a passage over the mountains. It was found imprudent also to continue our route to the eastward, a horde of Bosjesmans, commanded by one *Lynx*, consisting of five hundred people, having posted themselves near a point of the Bambos-berg. We were obliged, therefore, to turn off to the southward, directly through the Tarka.

In one of the mountains that terminates this division to the eastward, we discovered a cavern full of the drawings of different animals, generally of the larger kind, such as elephants, rhinosceroses, hippopotami, and, among the rest, one of the camelopardalis. The representation of this animal proved the assertion of the Bosjesman to be true, that the people who made these drawings were from hordes dwelling on the northern side of the Orange river;

because, on the southern side, the camelopardalis has never been met with. It is an animal entirely unknown to the inhabitants of Graaff Reynet.

The division of the Tarka is named after a river that, rising in the Bambos-berg, flows directly through it, and afterwards forms a confluence with the Fish river. It is a well-covered country; and, when inhabited, was considered as one of the best divisions of Graaff Reynet for sheep and cattle. At some of the deserted farms we found vineyards loaded with grapes, peach-trees, almonds, apple and pear-trees full of fruit, and vegetables of various kinds, thriving well without the assistance of water, or any kind of attention. Game seemed to be scarce, except springboks and elands. The only interesting object was a flight of the gryllivori, seemingly in search of locusts, that, like a cloud, continued to pass over-head for the space of fifteen minutes.

Quitting the Tarka on the twelfth, we encamped at night on the Fish river, so called from the great quantity of fish it was said to contain of a species of cyprinus or carp. The same river, after flowing some distance to the southward, and receiving a number of tributary streams, takes the name of the Great Fish river, and from thence becomes, as before mentioned, a boundary of the colony.

On the right bank of the river were two wells of hepatized water, easily distinguished by the strong smell they emitted, not unlike that of the rinsings of a foul gun-barrel. The wells were only a few paces asunder, and differed one degree of Fahrenheit in temperature, the larger being 88° and the smaller 87°. The latter boiled up uniformly; but the former threw up the water by starts. This was

about three feet deep, and rounded like a pot; it consisted of a hard crust of cemented rock, formed of minute pebbles of various colours, of small quartz crystals worn round in their subterranean passage, and ferruginous globular pyrites. The cement appeared to be chiefly fine emery-sand. The soil of the adjacent country, and of the banks of the river, was a firm blueish clay. On every side of the wells, and not many yards distant from them, were several circular bogs puffed up to the height of four or five feet above the common surface. These were highly elastic, and gave out springs of water that was cold, and clear, and tasteless. The waters of these hepatic wells are said to have been found very efficacious in healing bruises and sprains, and favourable also to rheumatic complaints, to which, from the great changeableness of the climate, the peasantry are very subject.

About twelve miles to the westward of the wells, in a kloof of a detached mountain, we found a considerable quantity of native nitre. It was in a cavern similar to those used by Bosjesmans for their winter habitations, and in which they make the drawings above noticed. The under surface of the projecting stratum of calcareous sand-stone, and the sides that supported it, were encrusted with a coating of clear white salt-petre, that came off in flakes from a quarter of an inch to an inch or more in thickness. The fracture resembled that of refined sugar: it burned completely away without leaving any residuum; and, if dissolved in water, and this evaporated, crystals of pure prismatic nitre were obtained. This salt, in the same state, is to be met with under the sand-stone strata of many of the mountains of Africa; but perhaps not in sufficient quantities to be employed as an article of export. There was also in

the same cave, running down the sides of the rock, a black substance that apparently was bituminous: the peasantry called it the urine of the Das. The dung of this gregarious animal was lying upon the roof of the cavern to the amount of many waggon-loads. The putrid animal matter, filtering through the rock, contributed, no doubt, to the formation of the nitre.

The hepatic wells and the native nitre-rocks were in the division of Agter Sneuwberg which joins the Tarka to the south-west. Part of it resembles the other Sneuwberg; but the side adjoining the Fish river is Karroo ground, and the plains there are covered with tall bushes of the salsola. The soap that the inhabitants make from the ashes of this plant, and the fat of sheep's tails, is a considerable article of their revenue. Cattle and sheep are purchased by the butchers upon the spot; but soap and butter are carried in waggons to the Cape. The corn of this division was wholly consumed by the locusts; and the grass and the shrubs were so much dêvoured that the cattle were almost starving. The numerous herds of springboks assisted also to bare the ground of its produce. In no part of Africa had such prodigious numbers of these animals been seen together as in this division. Our party, who were accustomed to judge pretty nearly of the number of sheep in a flock, estimated one troop of the springboks to consist of about five thousand; but if the accounts of these people might be credited, more than ten times that number have been seen together at such times as they were about to migrate.

On the fifteenth we made another long excursion into the Tarka mountains, near where they unite with the great chain that runs along the upper part

of the Kaffer country. Our object was to find among the drawings, made by the Bosjesmans, the representation of an unicorn. One of the party promised to bring us directly to the spot where he knew such a drawing stood. We set off at an early hour, and rode through several defiles along the beds of temporary streamlets. In one place was a very large and curious cavern formed by a water-fall, that from time to time had deposited a vast mass of stalactitical matter; many of the ramifications were not less than forty or fifty feet in length. Some were twisted and knotted like the roots of an old tree, and others were cellular and cavernous. This great mass, reflected from a sheet of deep water beneath, clear as crystal, hemmed in by two steep faces of solid rock, and fronted by two old weeping-willows, made as fine a piece of wild and romantic scenery as fancy could design. A little on one side of the cavern, and under a long projecting ridge of smooth, white sand-stone, were several sketches of animals, and satirical attempts to represent the colonists in ridiculous situations and attitudes, characterizing them by some of their most common and striking habits. But the grand object of our search was still wanting. The long-necked camelopardalis was easily distinguished among the rest; as was also the rhinosceros and the elephant.

The same kind of black matter that had been found along with the native nitre, was here abundantly adhering to the rocks, and oozing down the sides of the cave. A Bosjesman that belonged to one of the party informed us that his countrymen mixed it with water, and drank it as tea. This cavern was near the source of the Riet river, a small stream that falls into the Fish river.

We still continued our search in the kloofs of the mountains, in the hope of meeting with the figure of the unicorn, the peasantry being equally sanguine to convince me of the truth of their assertions as I was to gratify curiosity. We came, at length, to a very high and concealed kloof, at the head of which was a deep cave covered in front by thick shrubbery. One of the party mounted up the steep ascent, and having made his way through the close brushwood, he gave us notice that the sides of the cavern were covered with drawings. After clearing away the bushes to let in the light, and examining the numerous drawings, some of which were tolerably well executed, and others caricatures, part of a figure was discovered that was certainly intended as the representation of a beast with a single horn projecting from the forehead. Of that part of it which distinctly appeared, the following is a *fac simile*.

The body and legs had been erased to give place to the figure of an elephant that stood directly before it.

Nothing could be more mortifying than such an accident: but the peasantry, who could form no

idea of the consequence I attached to the drawing of such an animal, seemed to enjoy my chagrin.—On being told, however, that a thousand, or even five thousand, rixdollars would be given to any one who would produce an original, they stood gaping with open mouths, and were ready to enlist for an expedition behind the Bambos-berg, where some of them were quite certain the animal was to be found. Imperfect as the figure was, it was sufficient to convince me that the Bosjesmans are in the practice of including, among their representations of animals, that of an unicorn; and it also offered a strong argument for the existence of a living original. Among the several thousand figures of animals that, in the course of the journey, we had met with, none had the appearance of being monstrous, none that could be considered as works of the imagination, "creatures of the brain;" on the contrary, they were generally as faithful representations of nature as the talents of the artist would allow. An instance of this appeared in the cavern we last visited. The back shell of the *testudo geometrica* was lying on the ground; and the regular figures with which it is marked, and from which it takes its name, had been recently, and very accurately, copied on the side of a smooth rock. It was thought, indeed, from several circumstances, that the savages had slept in the cavern the preceding night.

The unicorn, as it is represented in Europe, is unquestionably a work of fancy; but it does not follow from thence that a quadruped with one horn, growing out of the middle of the forehead, should not exist. The arguments, indeed, that might be offered, are much stronger for its existence than the objections are against it. The first idea of such an animal seems to have been taken from Holy Writ; and

from the description there given, a representation of the unicorn, very illy conceived, has been assumed as a supporter to regal arms. The animal, to which the writer of the Book of Job, who was no mean natural historian, puts into the mouth of the Almighty a poetical allusion, has been supposed, with great plausibility, to be the one-horned rhinosceros.—"Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the "furrow? or will he harrow the vallies after thee? "Wilt thou trust him because his strength is great, "or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?" Moses also very probably meant the rhinosceros when he mentions the unicorn as having the strength of God. Aristotle had a very different idea of the animal, to which he gives the name of unicorn, for he describes it as a species of wild ass with solidungulous feet.

The African rhinosceros, having invariably two horns, cannot be supposed as the prototype of the Bosjesmans' paintings of the unicorn. Besides, the former frequently occurs among their productions, and is represented as the thick short-legged figure that it really is, whilst the latter is said by the peasantry to be uniformly met with as a solidungulous animal resembling the horse, with an elegantly shaped body, marked from the shoulders to the flanks with longitudinal stripes or bands. The greatest number of such drawings are said to be met with in the Bambos-berg; and, as the people who make them live on the north side of this great chain of mountains, the original may one day, perhaps, be also found there.

This part of Africa is as yet untrodden ground, none of the peasantry having proceeded beyond the mountains. It may be said, perhaps, that if such an animal existed, and was known to the natives in-

habiting a part of the country not very distant from the borders of the colony, the fact would certainly before this time have been ascertained. This, however, does not follow. Very few of the colonists have crossed the Orange river, or have been higher along its banks than the part where we were under the necessity of turning off to the southward; and the sort of communication that the peasantry have with the Bosjesmans, is not of that nature to supply much information respecting the country they inhabit. The mouth of the Orange river is much nearer to the Cape than the plains behind the Kaffer mountains; yet it was but the other day that the existence of the camelopardalis was ascertained near the former place, though no savage nation, but a civilized tribe of Hottentots only, intervened. Certain animals, as well as plants, confine themselves to certain districts of the same country. The animal above mentioned was never known to have passed the Orange river. It would appear also that in Northern Africa it has its limited range; for, since the time of Julius Cæsar, when one was publicly exhibited in Rome, it had been lost to Europe till within the present century. The accounts given of it by ancient writers were looked upon as fabulous. The gnoo is found only in certain parts of Southern Africa; and the blue antelope (the leucophæa) which confined itself to the banks of one small river in the vicinity of Zwellendam, is now entirely lost to the colony. The springbok, seen in the northern parts in troops of thousands, never made its appearance in any part of the district of Zwellendam.

The Bosjesmans have no knowledge of any doubts concerning the existence of such an animal as the unicorn; nor do they seem to think there is any

his brother, saw, near the same place, an animal exactly of the shape of a horse, and somewhat larger than the qua-cha, that had longitudinal black stripes on a light ground; it was grazing among a herd of elands. The two brothers having been some time without food, from their anxiety first to secure an eland, neglected the striped animal, intending afterwards to give chase to it; but his speed was so wonderfully swift, that, bounding towards the mountains, he was presently out of their sight.

Martinus Prinslo of Bruyntjes Hoogté, when on a hunting excursion, saw behind the same mountain several wild horses, entirely different from either the qua-cha or the zebra, but they were so shy that they never could approach them sufficiently near to make minute distinctions; they appeared to be of a light cinereous colour, without stripes. This, however, might be a deception of sight arising from distance, as dark stripes upon a light ground cannot be distinguished very far; they form a shade between the two colours, and the lighter tint is predominant; as the primitive colours disposed in concentric circles on a card, and put in motion, will appear white. The black and buff zebra, even when very near it, and especially if in motion, appears of a dull blueish ash colour, like the common ass. It is therefore probable, that the animals described by the three different persons, were of the same species. Vaillant also, who may generally be depended on, when he speaks of animals, mentions his having chased beyond the Namaaquas, day after day in vain, an Isabella coloured zebra. This also, in all probability, was of the same kind as the others.

The weather had been excessively sultry for many days; and towards the setting of the sun on

this day, as we were descending the mountain, the heavens became suddenly overspread with heavy black clouds that momentarily threatened to burst. The waggons just reached in time a spot in the valley, in some measure sheltered from the wind, when the storm opened with incredible fury. The violence of the wind was so great, that it swept away every thing before it; and it was followed by a burst of thunder that seemed to "shake the foundations of old earth." Peal after peal incessantly rushed on each other, and roared in the mountains as if tearing and riving in pieces their masses of rock; and streams of livid fire flew with terrible swiftness to every part of the horizon. Heavy rain, mingled with hailstones of unusual bigness, and violent squalls of wind, seemed to be contending for the mastery with the thunder and the fire.

> "———Since I was man,
> "Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
> "Such groans of roaring wind, and rain, I never
> "Remember to have heard."

The storm continued a great part of the night; and on the following morning some of its effects were seen in the wreck of a grove of tall mimosas, the greatest part of which was torn up by the roots. Such like storms are said to be very frequent in these great chains of mountains during the summer months; but the south-east winds, which blow with such strength at the Cape, are not felt in the interior parts of the country. At the Cape there happens less thunder and lightning than perhaps in any other part of the world, the island of St. Helena excepted, where they are scarcely known to the inhabitants.

Passing over a rough mountainous country, we halted on the thirtieth near the source of the Bavi-

aperture, almost touches the water. It is made of green grass, firmly put together and curiously woven. Another small bird, the *Parus Capensis*, or Cape Titmouse, constructs its luxurious nest of the *pappus*, or down of a species of asclepias. This nest is made of the texture of flannel, and the fleecy hosiery is not more soft. Near the upper end projects a small tube about an inch in length, with an orifice about three-fourths of an inch in diameter. Immediately under the tube, is a small hole in the side, that has no communication with the interior part of the nest; in this hole the male sits at nights, and thus they are both screened from the weather. The sparrow in Africa hedges round its nest with thorns; and even the swallow, under the eaves of houses, or in the rifts of rocks, makes a tube to its nest of six or seven inches in length. The same kind of birds in Northern Europe, having nothing to apprehend from monkies, snakes, and other noxious animals, construct open nests.

From the Bavian's river we made an excursion, for the second time, into the Kaffer country, where we ascended the Kaka, the continuation of the first range of mountains in the Sneuwberg. The summit was broken into hill and dale, and the surface beautifully varied with patches of green grass, and clumps of tall forest trees. The thick and sombre foliage of the woods, throwing their deep shadows into the hollows, contrasted with the bright and lively green knolls of grass, produced a succession of *gleams and glooms* that were extremely beautiful and pleasing. No part of Africa had yet afforded such grand, picturesque, and diversified scenery, as this commencement of a double chain of mountains, and the intermediate forests, of which the eye, looking easterly, could discover no end. The trees that were

Yew, some of which were from twenty to thirty feet in circumference, and sixty to seventy feet in length.

The summit of the Kaka mountain commanded a most extensive view of the Kaffer country, as far as the sea-coast to the south, and beyond the residence of the king to the south-east. The level plains over which the Kat and the Kaapna are seen to serpentize, those plains where once the Ghonaqua nation tended their flocks and herds, now desolate, were laid as it were at the feet of the spectator.

A number of rare and beautiful birds were seen about the forests of the Kakaberg. Among these, one of the most remarkable was the *Cuculus Persa*, or Touraco. This superb bird, by its gestures, seems as if conscious of its superior beauty. The *Upupa*, or Hopoe, was very plentiful; the *Numida meleagris* equally so. A fifth species of bustard was also seen here, with brown and white wings, and neck of a cerulean blue colour; size, that of a pheasant. Along the road were numbers of that beautiful little pigeon, called here the Namaaqua dove, not larger than a sparrow.

On entering one of the narrow vallies, we seemed on a sudden to be overtaken in the midst of a shower of snow, which we thought to be the pappus or down of certain plants. On closer examination, however, it was found to proceed from myriads of white ants, on the wing. The life of the Ephemeris, in its perfect state, is that of a single day; but the flight of the white ant is but a leap into the air for a few moments, from whence they tumble to the ground, never to rise again. The

wings are so very fine, and so slightly attached to their bodies, that they generally fall off, or are broken with the fall. Others immediately roll them off, and afterwards creep into the crevices of the ground to end their existence in quiet. It would seem they had some presentiment of the doom that awaited them, and that they hastened to escape under the cover of the earth to avoid being devoured by their own children, which, in numberless myriads, swarm in the roads and naked places of the ground, particularly after a shower of rain. Heat and moisture, the two great productive powers in nature, or those at least that call the vital principle into action, bring forth the young from the eggs of all the insect tribe that are deposited in the ground. Thus, though a rainy summer may promote vegetation, yet it at the same time calls to life such multitudes of destructive vermin, which otherwise would have remained dormant in the ground, that on the whole a dry season is perhaps the best.

From the Bavian's river into Bruyntjes Hoogté is a day's journey, and through this to the entrance of Camdeboo another, and three from hence to Graaff Reynet, at which village we arrived on the twenty-fourth, on one of the warmest days that we had yet experienced in the whole country. The thermometer, when exposed to the wind in the shade, rose to 108°: whilst in the house it was cool and pleasant at 82°. It was one of those hot winds, such as we had once before experienced on the banks of the Great Fish river. They happen most frequently upon the Karroo plains, where they are sometimes attended with tornadoes that are really dreadful. Waggons are overturned, men and horses thrown down, and the shrubs torn out of the ground. The dust and sand are whirled into the

CHAP. V.

Sketches on a Journey from Graaff Reynet along the Sea-Coast to the Cape.

THE long continuance of dry weather had, for more than a month, rendered the passage of the Karroo, or great desert, impracticable, on account of the scarcity both of water and of herbage. All the rivers that intersect it, and the few springs that are found upon it, were said to be completely dried up; and the farmers of Graaff Reynet, who, at this season of the year, just after their harvest, generally make their annual visit to the Cape, were under the necessity of delaying their journey, or of going round through the district of Zwellendam, in all parts of which, and at all seasons of the year, is abundance of water. Three days, however, previous to our departure from Graaff Reynet, there had fallen such heavy and continued rain, both at that place, and to the westward in the mountains of Camdeboo and Sneuwberg, that little doubt was entertained of its having brought upon the Karroo a plentiful supply of water, as far at least as De Beer valley, the delightful meadow of the desert, mentioned in a former chapter.

On the strength of this conjecture, we departed from Graaff Reynet on the ninth of December, and found the two rivers, Sunday and Camdeboo, so much swelled with the rains as barely to be fordable. At the port also of Camdeboo, which opens upon the desert, the small river there was running

with a copious and rapid stream; a circumstance that nearly removed every doubt, and scarcely suffered an idea to exist of the probability even of experiencing any want of water on this side of De Beer valley. We soon however found, by fatal experience, that the extent of the rains had been very limited. In fact they had reached only a few miles beyond the Poort. Still we had hopes that the Hottentot's river, a day's journey farther, would contain some water, or should this even fail, that the Karuka, whose source was in the mountains of Camdeboo, must undoubtedly be full from the late rains that were perceived to fall in those mountains.

On the eleventh, therefore, we left the Poort, and the farther we proceeded upon the desert, the fainter became the traces of the rain that had fallen, till at length they totally disappeared. The face of the country very soon presented only one continued plain of uniform aridity and barrenness. The few saline plants, thinly scattered over a surface of white clay sprinkled with reddish sand, were shrivelled up, crackling under the feet like so many bundles of rotten sticks. The rays of the sun playing upon the naked surface were painful to behold, and their dazzling light highly injurious to the eye.

About the middle of the day a melancholy object presented itself before us, near the side of the road. It was a horse at his last gasp, for want of water. He was known by our Hottentots to have left Graaff Reynet eight days before, with a party of farmers, who had gone from thence, in order to proceed across the Karroo to Zwarteberg. He had probably strayed from them in the night, the time they generally travel, and by that means was left

behind. The poor animal, on perceiving us, made a faint attempt to advance towards the road, as if to entreat a drop of water, but the exertion was too great. He fell exhausted on the ground, and the only relief that could be given to his painful sufferings, was that of bringing them to a speedy end. A few miles farther, another of these poor creatures, that had belonged to the same party, was found by the road side already dead. Such objects were but ill calculated to keep alive our hopes in our present situation. We ventured, however, to proceed, making the best of our way to Hottentot's river; and, after a long and very fatiguing day's journey, about nine o'clock at night we reached this river, which, to our great grief and mortification, we found completely dry; and its clayey bed broken and divided, by the heat of the weather, into polygonal figures, like the summits of basaltic columns. The disappointment may more readily be conceived than described; and we now began to be seriously afraid for our cattle. To quench the thirst of man a small quantity of water is sufficient for a length of time; but cattle, after the fatigue of a long day's journey, require more than could possibly be carried for their use. The little that we had brought upon the waggons was shared among our people, who happened to be numerous enough to require our whole stock.

A consultation was held, to take into consideration the steps that appeared most advisable to be put in practice. The result of this was, that as soon as the oxen, which had been in the yoke the whole day, had refreshed themselves by a few hours' rest, the relays should be put to the waggons, and we should proceed on our journey. We were unwilling to return, and it was in vain to think of remain-

One single hope only now remained, and that was fixed upon De Beer valley. This place we knew to be a kind of reservoir, in which a number of periodical streams had their confluence from various parts of the distant mountains of Nieuwveld, Winterberg, and Sneuwberg. The distance from our present situation to it was not very far, but our cattle were exceedingly exhausted; and had long expressed their suffering by hollow lowings, and the sheep by their perpetual bleating. The children also of the Hottentots who were with us, cried incessantly for water.

The appearance of De Beer valley, from a distance, indicated no want of water; it was that of a beautiful green meadow; and the cattle, and the horses, and the Hottentots, the moment it caught the eye, scampered away towards it in full career. Those in the waggons were not behind the rest. Their looks and manner, on arriving at the spot, sufficiently expressed the disappointment they felt on finding the beds of the pools and the rivers all perfectly dry. In one place only, shaded by mimosas that had withstood the drought, was a small puddle of muddy water. Of this we contrived to bail out with our hats a small quantity for the horses, but it afforded none for the cattle. The strong grass, in many places, and the reeds still retaining some verdure, were greedily devoured by the oxen, and it was to this circumstance I am convinced their safety was owing.

Riding over the surface of the valley in search of some pond or rivulet that might afford a little water, the glimpse of a small pool caught the eye of my horse through some thick bushes, into which he directly sprung, and, in spite of resistance, forced his way into the water. He had no sooner,

however, applied his mouth to it, than he withdrew his head, finding it to be as salt as brine. It was in fact the Salt river mentioned on a former visit to this place. Much of the water having evaporated in the course of the long series of hot weather, the banks were now encrusted with plates of salt, that wore the appearance of ice.

The reeds and rush-like grass having in some degree refreshed our cattle, towards the cool of the day we determined to start afresh, strike off towards the edge of the desert, and cross the great range of the Black mountains, beyond which there was no uncertainty of meeting with water. Our miserable cattle were, therefore, once more put into the waggons, and moving slowly through a pass of the mountains, which proved to be tolerably level, we came about midnight to a place where a Hottentot had told us was the *Karree fonteyn.* After searching about for some time in the dark, a kind of swamp was discovered, containing, in places, a little muddy and fetid water. Bad as it was, both Hottentots and cattle swallowed it with great avidity. For our own part, a bottle of chalybeate, and another of hepatic water, that had been taken and kept for experiment, were found very acceptable and refreshing.

On the fifteenth, after travelling about five hours, and after having been four days without fresh water, we came to a clear limpid stream called the *Keur fonteyn*, or Choice Spring; and never certainly did any stream of water appear to be more truly valuable and delightful. It was with the greatest difficulty that both cattle and Hottentots, who are equally void with the former of thought or reflection, were restrained from drinking to excess after so long an abstinence.

The great scarcity of water on those plains of Africa, known by the name of Karroo, rendering it sometimes hazardous, and almost always harrassing, for cattle to pass, should seem to point out the camel or the dromedary as the kind of animals best suited for the transport of goods and passengers in the colony of the Cape. The camel is more patient of hunger than most quadrupeds, and is able to endure thirst for a much longer space of time; and the harsh thorny shrubs, or the succulent plants, one or the other of which are to be met with on the most dreary of the deserts, would furnish for it abundance of food. It will carry with ease half a ton weight, which is more than twice the quantity that is ever drawn by an African ox.

We encamped on the seventeenth near the banks of the Olifant's river, where several hot springs issued out of a bog, consisting of a brownish oxyd of iron, mixed with irregular shaped pieces of ponderous iron stone, many of which seemed once to have been in a state of fusion. The water was chalybeate, as appeared from the great quantity of orange coloured sediment deposited in the channels through which it ran, and the fine steel blue skum with which the surfaces of the wells were covered. Of the four principal wells, all rising out of the same bog, the temperatures were 111°, 109°, 105°, and 95° of Fahrenheit's scale. They are much frequented by the neighbouring peasantry, and held by them to be efficacious in the cure of bruises, sprains, and rheumatic complaints.

How friendly soever the water of the wells might prove to the human constitution, it could not be more so than in appearance it was favourable to the growth of plants. Along the sides of the streamlets a zone-leafed geranium was observed climbing

to the height of fifteen feet, and the whole shrubbery that grew in the vicinity of the water was more than usually luxuriant.

The long drought had completely deprived the Olifant's river of its waters, and the face of the country was nearly as barren and parched as the Karroo on the opposite side of the Black mountains, except indeed along each side of the bed of the river, where the mimosas, now full of golden blossoms, still retained their verdure, and where the Canna plant, or Salsola, was growing to the height of eight or ten feet. Should these two articles, at any future period, be considered as worthy attention in a commercial point of view, the division of Olifant's river is the most favourable situation for encouraging their culture, and for procuring their products in the most considerable quantities.

None of the larger kind of game, except the Koodoo, are now to be met with near Olifant's river, though the animal, whose name it bears, in all probability once abounded there. The river otter is plentiful, as are also two or three species of wild-cat, one of which appeared to be that described under the name of Caracal. The body was of a deep chesnut brown, and the points of the ears tipped with brushes of long black hairs; a second species, or rather variety, was of a cinereous blue colour; and a third, clouded black and white. Here also is abundance of that species of viverra called the *Ratel*. Its choice food is honey, and nature has endowed it with a hide so very thick, that the sting of a bee is unable to penetrate through it. No animal is perhaps more tenacious of life than the ratel. A dog with great difficulty can worry it to death; and it is a species of

amusement for the farmers to run knives through different parts of the body, without being able, for a length of time, to deprive it of existence.

Turning off to the southward from the Olifant's river, and passing round a high detached mountain called the *Kamnaasieberg*, we crossed a range of hills, and descended into Langé Kloof, or the Long Pass. This is a narrow valley, in few places exceeding a mile in width, hemmed in between a high unbroken chain of mountains on the south, and a parallel range of green hills on the north, stretching nearly due east and west, without any interruption, about one hundred and fifty miles. The hills on the northern side increasing to the height of mountains in their progress to the eastward, terminate on the plains near Zwart Kop's river; and the great chain of mountains on the south side runs into the sea near Camtoo's bay, and extends to the westward till it meets the high mountains of Hex river.

Langé Kloof abounds with streams of water and good pasturage. The ground throughout consists of a fine rich soil, and to almost all the habitations are good gardens, fruiteries, and vineyards. Being considerably elevated above the level of the sea, and situated in the midst of mountains, snow frequently falls in the winter months, and lies on the ground for a length of time.

From one end to the other of Langé Kloof there is but one passage for waggons over the south chain of mountains, and this is seldom made use of, being considered among the most formidable and difficult roads and passes in the colony. It lies, in fact, over the very summit of one of the points in

the chain, called the Duyvil's kop, or the Devil's head. We had sixteen oxen to each waggon, in order to effect our passage of this mountain. The road was dreadfully steep and stony; and as it approached the summit, where the width of the ridge was not above fifteen paces, the ascent was from stratum to stratum of rock, like a flight of stairs, of which some of the steps were not less than four feet high. Upon these it was necessary to lift the waggons by main strength. Just as we reached the summit, the weather, which had been remarkably pleasant, the thermometer standing at 74°, now began to be overcast, the wind blew fresh, and shortly after an immense sheet of black vapour was observed to approach, borne upon the south-east wind from the sea. Ascending rapidly in rolling volumes, it completely immersed us upon the summit of the mountain. The temperature of the air was immediately decreased to 39° of Fahrenheit. Before our three waggons had got over the highest peak, the weather began to clear up, and it was then curious enough to observe that part of the country between the mountains and the sea involved in dense clouds, and deluged apparently with heavy rain, whilst the northern side of the same mountains enjoyed a sunshine unsullied by a single cloud.

The instability of the climate of the southern angle of Africa, has frequently been noticed in the course of these sketches; yet a more remarkable instance of it had not perhaps occurred than in the present situation. An elevation of about one thousand feet, or little more, produced a variation of temperature, in the course of two hours, equal to thirty-five degrees. It afterwards appeared, that, on the same day, being the longest in the year,

snow had fallen and lain for some time upon the same chain of mountains, close behind Zwellendam, where it is not particularly lofty.

The descent of the Duyvil's kop was much more gradual than had been the ascent, and the smooth grassy surface of the northern side was now changed into an extensive shrubbery, among which the most conspicuous plants were heaths and proteas of amazing sizes; one of the latter having a round thick leaf with a purple margin, bore a flower that measured very nearly ten inches in diameter. Several species of the Ixia, of the Iris, of the Morea, and Gladiolus, now in full bloom, adorned the sides of the hills, whilst the Cape Sophora, and the Arduina with its jasmine-like smell, perfumed the whole country.

At the feet of this chain of mountains runs a belt of wood extending with little interruption near two hundred miles in length; and consisting chiefly of a great variety of forest trees, many of which are found of a prodigious magnitude. Some of the woods of the colony have already been noticed. Here I completed my catalogue of such as appeared most applicable to common uses, having procured in the whole forty-four different sorts. Of these, I could have wished to have been able to indulge the Botanist with Linnæan names, but the little time I had to spare, and the difficulty of procuring blossoms from tall forest trees, made it impossible. I must, therefore, content myself with giving the colonial names only of most of them; and even these may prove of infinite service to the future traveller, who may wish to direct his attention to the subject.

Catalogue of useful Woods, growing in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope.

NO.	COLONIAL NAMES.	GENERAL SIZE. Height, without a branch Feet.	Diameter Feet.	QUALITY.	USES.	LINNÆAN NAMES.	REMARKS.
1.	Autiniequas Geel hout.	20 to 50	10	Not unlike deal.....	Balk, beams, plank, &c.	Taxus elongatus	
2.	Zwart yzer hout.....	25 — 45	4	Very hard.....	Ploughs, axes for wheels, &c. Ditto Ditto	Sideroxylon Milanopoleos Sideroxylon	
3.	Wit yzer hout.....	25 — 45	3 1-2	Nearly as hard as do.			
4.	Hassagai hout.....	20 — 40	3	Like plain mahogany	Fellies & spokes of wheels, chairs, &c.	Curtesia faginea.....	A very good wood for all kinds of house carpentering
5.	Wit peer.....	15 — 20	2 to 3	Hard and tough.....	In general use for waggons		
6.	Rood peer.....	20 — 30	3	Harder than ditto...	Axes, waggon poles, beams, &c.		
7.	Rood hout.....	12 — 15	1 1-2 to 2	.....	Not much used		
8.	Gomassie hout.....	12 — 15	1 1-2 to 2	.....	Veneering, household furniture		
9.	Saffran hout.....	10 — 15	1 to 2	Close and hard			
10.	Coyatte hout.....	12 — 20	1 to 2	Tough.....	Staves for butter firkins		
11.	Roode Els.....	15 — 25	2	Stands water well...	Mill-work.....	Cunonia Capensis	
12.	Witte Els.....	10 — 12	3	Soft and tough.....	Plank for boxes, &c.		
13.	Stink hout.....	20 — 35	3 to 5	Like walnut.....	Furniture		
14.	Buckan hout.....	15 — 25	2	Tough.....	Waggon wheels		
15.	Massanu hout.....	20 — 25	3 to 5	Like yzer hout.....	Known only near Bosjesman's river		
16.	Camdeboo Stink hout..	12 — 15	3	Soft and porous.....	Very little used		
17.	Dorn hout.....	8 — 10	1 to 1 1-2	Hard and tough.....	Waggon wheel shoes, poles, &c.	Mimosa *Karroo*	
18.	Olyven hout.....	6 — 10	1	Very hard.....	General	Oliva Capensis	
19.	Wilgan hout.....	6 — 10	1 1-2	Of willow.....	Little used but where wood is scarce	Salix Babylonica	
20.	Hottentots' bourbonje..	12	1	Hard and short.....	Not used	Schotia speciosa.....	African Lignum Vitæ, but not applicable to the same purposes as that wood
21.	Zwart bast.....	12	1 1-2	Hard and tough.....	Not much used.....	Royena.....	Fit for poles of all sorts
22.	Niest hout.....	15	1	Very hard.....	In Bruyatjes Hoogte only	.....	Stands water remarkably well

Catalogue of useful Woods, growing in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope.

NO.	COLONIAL NAMES.	GENERAL SIZE. Height, without a branch Feet.	Diameter. Feet.	Inc.	QUALITY.	USES.	LINNÆAN NAMES.	REMARKS.
23.	Kersen hout	12	1	0	.....	Not used	.....	Apparently not of much value; the tree scarce
24.	Castanie hout	20	1 1-2	0	Soft	.....	Callodendrum	
25.	Hard peer	14 to 16	1 1-2	0	Harder than No. 2.	Sometimes in waggons		
26.	Hoenderspoor	12 — 14	0	9	Hard and close	Not much used		
27.	Buffel hoorn	12 — 14	0	9	....Ditto	Not used		
28.	Bosch bourbonjes	.....	.....		.....	.....	Schotia, or Guiacum, new species	Found only in Kaffer land
29.	Meelk hout	6 — 8	1	0	Very hard	Ploughs	Ficus?	
30.	Essen hout							
31.	Geel hout (proper)	.....	.....		.....	.....	Taxus?	
32.	Karru hout	6 — 8	0	10	Tough	Nothing particular	Euclea?	Used by the Bosjesman Hottentots for bows
33.	Cyperus, or Cedar hout	12 — 20	1	0	Of fir	Chests, drawers, furniture	Thuia, new species?	The strong smell of turpentine it emits, prevents insects from entering it
34.	Klip Essen	20	8 to 10	0	Hard and short	Little used		
35.	Saly hout	15	8 — 10	0	Hard and heavy	Yokes for waggons, charcoal	Budleia Salvi folia?	
36.	Witte bosch hout	20	2	0	Light and soft	Fellies for light carriage wheels		
37.	Wilde Granate	12	0	8	Short	Nothing particular		
38.	Wilde Vier	10	0	7	Hard	Chairs, Table feet, &c.	Lyceum?	
39.	Wit Essen hout	12 — 15	3	0	Close and soft	Plank for various purposes	.....	Recommended to be tried as plank in boat building
40.	Koeha	10 — 12	0	7-9	Hard and tough	Carriage poles	.....	A close-grained, shaded, handsome wood
41.	Seybast	10 — 12	0	7-9	Tough	.....Ditto	.....	The interior bark of this tree is just like silk, but not of long fibre
42.	Zwarte hout	20	1 to 2	1-2 0	Hard and tough	Fellies for waggon wheels	.....	Good for poles, being long, small, and straight
43.	Keur hout	20	1 — 2	1-2 0	Light and soft	Spars, rafters, &c.	Saphora Capensis	
44.	Witte hout	15 — 20	1 — 2	0	.....Ditto	Ditto		

It may be observed, that the sizes marked in the above list are, as nearly as could be guessed, such as they run in general, but of both the Geelhouts, may be met with abundance of trees, from seventy to ninety feet in length, and very proper for ships' masts, spars, and other timber used in ship building.

Between the foot of the Duyvil's kop and Plettenberg's bay, the latter of which is about fifty miles to the eastward of the former, the country is beautifully wooded, and intersected with numberless rivulets, issuing out of the forests; there are also several broad deep rivers, over which it is necessary to pass in boats. Some of these terminate in large sheets of water, forming beautiful lakes, whose margins are finely fringed with wood. One lake is sufficiently curious, having neither inlet nor outlet, and the water is greener than any part of the ocean, not salt, but so slightly saline as scarcely to be perceptibly so to the taste. One of the farmers told me, with great triumph, that he had puzzled the Governor Van Plettenberg, with respect to the water of the Green lake, by asking him whence the colour proceeded. The governor had made him for answer, that it came from the surrounding shrubbery, being green matter washed away by the rains. Upon this the peasant showed him some of it in a glass, where it appeared clear and colourless. There is a tradition among the Hottentots, that this lake, now six or seven miles in circumference, was no very long time ago, a beautiful green meadow, and it is still said to be increasing in size. If the quantity of water thrown in by the rains, and its springs, should exceed the quantity that may escape by absorption and evaporation, the Green lake will one day, by great pres-

sure, break down the barrier that now divides it from the sea, which has evidently been the case with its neighbouring lake the Knysna. This, in fact, is now become an arm of the sea, into which the tide sets through a narrow passage or portal, as into a dock. This passage, though narrow, and not quite clear of rocks, would admit of small vessels; and within there is plenty of deep water stretching out into a bason of several miles in width. The surrounding hills are clumped with forest trees, and their sloping sides are clothed with shrubbery down to the water's edge. The lake is studded with a number of flat islands, covered with verdure. The arms of the Knysna stretch into the deep vallies at the feet of the mountains, and are there lost in impenetrable forests. The whole country is boldly marked, and most magnificently clothed, and may be considered, beyond comparison, as the grandest and most beautiful part of Southern Africa.

The farm-houses in this part of the country were also in a better style than they are usually found to be at so great a distance from the capital. Being near the sea-coast, the proprietors had been at the expense of burning shells into lime, and of white-washing all the buildings. A sort of chalky lime-stone was also here observed in large masses, lying upon, and near the surface; but was never burnt into lime. To almost every house was attached, generally in a grove of trees, a small inclosure with ornamented walls, serving as the family burying-ground. The decorations usually bestowed on those mansions of the dead, appeared to have much more engaged the attention than those of the living. In the interment of the dead, the Dutch have no kind of service or ceremony.

Plettenberg's, as well as Zwart Kop's bay, is entirely open to the south-east winds. The west point called Robenberg, or seal mountain, lies in latitude 34° 6′ south, longitude 23° 48′ east; distance from Cape Point 320 English miles. The eastern shore of the bay rounds off into the general trending of the coast, which, seen from the landing-place, terminates in a very high and regular cone-shaped mountain, called in the old Portugueze charts, Pic Formosa, but by the more modern Dutch navigators, the Grenadier's Cap. The best landing-place is about three miles and a half to the northward of the Robenberg, on a sandy beach, about five hundred and fifty yards in length, guarded at each extremity by rocky points that project into the sea. A heavy swell generally sets into the bay, except in northerly and north-westerly winds; when these blow, the water is smooth. The south-west winds occasion the greatest heave of the sea.

Close to the landing-place is erected a new and handsome dwelling-house; a magazine for the reception of timber, two hundred feet in length; and a strong commodious building for the reception of troops. The intention of the Dutch government was to form an establishment here, for the purpose of deriving from it a supply of timber, to answer their demands for that article in the Cape. Strong prejudices, however, have long been entertained against the Cape timber, though perhaps without grounds for them. Few woods will stand the effects of alternate exposure to heavy rains, dry winds, and a scorching sun; where such exposure has been guarded against, one of the slightest of the woods, the Geelhout, has been known to remain for more than a century, without showing any symptoms of decay.

In the forests, near this bay, a creeping plant grows in great plenty, whose interior bark, drawn off in fibres of forty or fifty feet in length, seems to be an excellent substitute for hemp. The Hottentots twist these fibres into very strong cordage. The bark of another native plant, a species of Hibiscus, made very excellent hemp. The leaves of the plant were deeply divided, like those of the *Cannabinus*, a species of the same genus, cultivated in India, for the purpose of obtaining hemp from the bark; but the stem of the African Hibiscus had small spines, and the flower was large, and of a sulphureous yellow colour.

Among the useful trees of the forests, we noticed a species of wild fig, that grew to a very considerable size, and bore a fruit resembling in shape and appearance the Bergamot pear. It had a pleasant subacid flavour, and was greedily devoured by the birds. The leaves were oblong-ovate. A species of salvia, or sage, grew wild, and was much esteemed for its healing qualities, when applied to green wounds. A species also of Solanum was much esteemed for the same purpose. The leaf resembled that of tobacco, on which account it was known by the name of wild tobacco; the upper side of the leaf was dark green and smooth; the under side white, and woolly; the stem woody and prickly. The woolly side of the leaf, applied to a swelling or gathering, quickly brings it to a head, and the green side afterwards as quickly heals it. I had an opportunity of seeing these effects in more than one instance. Not far from Plettenberg's bay, along the banks of a small rivulet, I met with a whole forest of the Strelitzia Alba, whose tall and tapering stems, like those of the Areca nut, or Mountain cabbage, were regular and well propor-

tioned, as the Corinthian shaft. Many of them ran to the height of five and twenty or thirty feet, without a leaf. It is sufficiently remarkable, that the three Strelitzias of Africa should be found in three distinct situations, and at great distances from each other; and what is still more remarkable, that the white species should grow so very abundantly along the side of one stream of water, and not a single plant be found near any of the rest in the same neighbourhood. From the great resemblance of this plant to the Banana tree, the peasantry call it the Wild Plantain.*

From Plettenberg's bay we returned to the westward, crossing many deep and dangerous rivers. Of these, the Kayman, or Crocodiles' river, was by much the most difficult to pass with waggons, the banks on either side being several hundred feet high, steep, and rocky. It is confidently asserted, that the animal, whose name the river bears, occasionally appears in it, though none of the people with me could testify to have seen any other species of that genus frequenting the water, except Iguanas, from six to ten feet in length. In the Nile only the crocodile is found, in so high a latitude as 31° or 32°; but the *Trichecus*, or Lamantin, frequents both coasts of Africa, from the Mediterranean to the Cape point, sometimes, though very rarely, entering the mouths of the rivers.

The Kayman's river separates the division of Plettenberg's bay from the Autiniequas land, a

* But the most elegant plant that occurred in the whole forest, was the native vine of Africa. This creeper ran to the very summits of the highest Geel hout trees, and bore a fruit in size and appearance not unlike the Morelle cherry, seldom more than two or three in a cluster, of a very agreeable and delicate subacid flavour. The leaves of this vine are shaped like those of the ivy, dark green, and smooth on the upper, and rather woolly on the under, surface; not deciduous, but evergreen.

tract of country which the Dutch government kept exclusively for its own use, both on account of the grand forests that were here easily accessible, and the excellent pasturage it afforded for their cattle at all seasons of the year. The mountains here being near the sea, attract the vapours, and cause a greater quantity of rain to fall than in any other part of the colony. This division is terminated to the westward by the great Brakke river, which rises in the forests above-mentioned, and, running directly south, discharges itself into Muscle bay.

Muscle bay, like all the others on this coast of the colony, is open to the south-east, but it is safer and better for shipping than either Zwart kop's, or Plettenberg's bay. The western point, called Cape Saint Blaize, is in latitude 34° 10′ south, longitude 22° 18′ east, and distance from the Cape about 240 English miles. Variation of the compass was 27° 54′ west, and time of high water at full and change about three o'clock. When the winds blow from south south-west, westerly, and round to east-north-east, and not too violently, the bay affords secure and easy anchorage for ships at the distance of half a mile to that of a mile from the landing-place. The winds that blow from east to south throw in a heavy swell; but the south-east winds never blow home here as at the Cape.

The general landing-place is upon a sandy beach, at the head of a small bay, into which runs a rivulet of water slightly impregnated with salt. This stream does not appear to be capable of filling above a dozen butts of water in a day. A magazine for the reception of grain is erected near the landing-place. It is a strong stone building, one hundred and fifty feet in length, and will conve-

niently hold ten thousand bushels of corn. The price of this article delivered here is about twenty-two rixdollars the load of thirty-one Winchester bushels, or at the rate of two shillings and ten-pence the bushel.

The bay abounds with excellent fish of various kind, with muscles that are large and of a strong flavour, and with oysters of an excellent quality; and, in the winter months, the black whale is very plentiful.

Great quantities of the common aloe grow upon the plains that surround Muscle bay. The inspissated juice of this plant was once an article that afforded a considerable profit to those who were at the trouble of collecting and preparing it, but the price is now reduced so low, about three-pence the pound, that it is no longer considered as an object worthy the attention of the inhabitants. Three pounds are as much as one person can collect and prepare in one day.

On the fifth we crossed Gauritz river, the western limit of the division of Muscle bay. This river may properly be called the Sink of the Colony. All the waters that have their origin within the distance of one hundred and fifty miles to the eastward, and as far to the westward, upon the Great Karroo, and mountains to the northward of it, meet in one immense chasm of the chain of mountains nearest the sea-shore, and are discharged through the channel of the Gauritz river. The sudden and copious inundations of this river are almost beyond credibility. The ruins of a house are still to be seen, that is said to have been destroyed by a swelling of the river, though the site cannot be much less than a hundred

feet above the level of the channel; at this time all its numerous branches scarcely supplied it with water sufficient to cause a current.

From Gauritz we proceeded to one of its branches, the False river, near which were seen a great variety of brown and yellow ochres, and abundance of that curious stone, already mentioned, under the name of paint stone.

On the sixth we passed several rivulets, whose united streams form the Kaffer Kuyl's river. In advancing towards the Cape, the country became better inhabited; neat houses stood on the banks of all the rivers, and the gardens, and vineyards, and fruiteries, were more expensive, and kept in a better state of culture. The surface of the country interjacent between the rivers was very irregular, the soil dry clay and chalk, and was fit for little else than a sheep pasture. It produced a great quantity of shrubs, among which was one called the *Gaurrie bosch* (Royena?) from whose berries, and those of the *Arduina*, some of the farmers had made a sweetish wine, not unlike that which in Europe is procured from the Alder.

The forests of Plettenberg's bay, and the Autiniequas land, had ceased to clothe the feet of the mountains from the point directly north of Muscle bay. Another clump now appeared, about twenty miles to the eastward of the Drosdy of Zwellendam, called the Grootvader's bosch. This wood, in the early stages of the colony, contained as great a variety of large timber trees as the others, but being so much nearer to the Cape, is now stripped of most of the wood that is valuable.

From Grootvader's bosch, a beautiful valley stretches along the feet of the mountains, as far almost as the Drosdy. This village is composed of about twenty houses, scattered over a fertile valley, with a perpetual stream of water flowing down it. The habitation of the Landrost stands at the head of the valley; is a very comfortable building, and has an extensive garden attached to it, surrounded with plantations of oaks, and well stocked with a variety of fruits.

The district of Zwellendam, is composed chiefly of that tract of country lying between the Black mountains and the sea-coast, and stretches to the eastward, as far as the Camtoos river, where Graaff Reynet first begins. The number of families contained in it, are between five and six hundred; and the whole population of whites amounts to about three thousand. The number of Hottentots, in the whole district, do not exceed two to each family; and that of slaves is about five.

Zwellendam affords no great supply of cattle to the Cape market, and still less so of sheep. Horses are brought up for sale in considerable numbers. The revenue of the farmers are principally derived from timber, grain, butter, soap, and dried fruits. To a naturalist, this district is the least interesting, except in botany, and in this department it offers an ample field. Of the number of those who have made that branch of science their particular pursuit, and who have visited this colony, none have sufficiently attended to the native forest trees, so as to be able to assign them their places in the prevailing system of arranging the vegetable part of the creation. Few antelopes, except the Reebok, Steenbok, and Duyker, are now remaining in the dis-

trict of Zwellendam. Formerly the Bonte'bok, the *Scripta* of the *Systema Naturæ*, was almost as numerous near the Drosdy, as the Springbok still continues to be in the Sneuwberg. At present they are rarely seen in troops exceeding a dozen. At one time also in the vicinity of Zwellendam, were a few of that elegant species of antelope, the *Leucophæa*, or blue antelope, an animal that is now no longer to be met with in the whole colony, at least none have been seen or heard of these ten years past. Hares and partridges are plentiful in every part of the district. The woods of Autiniequas land abound with a variety of birds, both great and small.

On the twelfth we entered the district of Stellenbosch, by crossing the river Zonder-end, and proceeded to Zoete Melk valley, a patch of excellent land belonging to government, and lately converted by it into a station for cavalry.

Proceeding up the valley through which the *Endlers* river meanders, we halted, late in the evening, at a place called the Bavian's kloof, where there is a small establishment of Moravian missionaries, or Hernhütters, so called from a village in Saxony where an asylum was offered to them after their expulsion from Moravia. These people have been several years in this colony, for the express purpose of instructing the Hottentots in the doctrines of Christianity, but had met with little encouragement, in the object of their mission, under the Dutch government. The number of their proselytes have increased of late to such a degree, that they have found it necessary to send to Europe for more teachers of the gospel.

Early in the morning I was awakened by the noise of some of the finest voices I had ever heard, and, on looking out, saw a group of female Hottentots sitting on the ground. It was Sunday, and they had assembled thus early to chant the morning hymn. They were all neatly dressed in printed cotton gowns. A sight so very different to what we had hitherto been in the habit of observing, with regard to this unhappy class of beings, could not fail of being grateful; and, at the same time, it excited a degree of curiosity as to the nature of the establishment. The good fathers, who were three in number, were well disposed to satisfy every question put to them. They were men of the middle age, plain and decent in their dress, cleanly in their persons, of modest manners, meek and humble in their deportment, but intelligent and lively in conversation, zealous in the cause of their mission, but free from bigotry or enthusiasm. Every thing about the place partook of that neatness and simplicity which were the strongest features in the outline of their character. The church they had constructed was a plain neat building; their mill for grinding corn was superior to any in the colony: their garden was in high order, and produced abundance of vegetables for the use of the table. Almost every thing that had been done was by the labour of their own hands. Agreeably to the rules of the society, of which they were members, each had learned some useful profession. One was well skilled in every branch of smith's work, the second was a shoemaker, and the third a taylor.

These missionaries have succeeded in bringing together into one society, more than six hundred Hottentots, and their numbers are daily increasing.

These live in small huts dispersed over the valley, to each of which was a patch of ground for raising vegetables. Those who had first joined the society had the choicest situations at the upper end of the valley, near the church, and their houses and gardens were very neat and comfortable; numbers of the poor in England not so good, and few better. Those Hottentots who chose to learn their respective trades, were paid for their labour as soon as they could earn wages. Some hired themselves out by the week, month, or year, to the neighbouring peasantry; others made mats and brooms for sale: some bred poultry, and others found means to subsist by their cattle, sheep, and horses. Many of the women and children of soldiers, belonging to the Hottentot corps, reside at Bavian's kloof, where they are much more likely to acquire industrious habits than by remaining in the camp.

On Sundays they all regularly attend the performance of divine service, and it is astonishing how ambitious they are to appear at church neat and clean. Of the three hundred, or thereabouts, that composed the congregation, about half were dressed in coarse printed cottons, and the other half in the ancient sheep-skin dresses; and it appeared on inquiry, that the former were the first who had been brought within the pale of the church; a proof that their circumstances at least had suffered nothing from their change of life. Persuasion and example had convinced them, that cleanliness in their persons, not only added much to the comforts of life, but was one of the greatest preservatives of health; and that the little trifle of money they had to spare, was much better applied in procuring decent covering for the body, than in the purchase of spirits and tobacco, articles so far from being

necessaries, that they might justly be considered as the most pernicious evils.

The deportment of the Hottentot congregation, during divine service, was truly devout. The discourse delivered by one of the fathers was short, but replete with good sense, pathetic, and well suited to the occasion: tears flowed abundantly from the eyes of those to whom it was particularly addressed. The females sung in a stile that was plaintive and affecting; and their voices were in general sweet and harmonious. Not more than fifty had been admitted as members of the Christian faith, by the ceremony of baptism. There appeared to be no violent zeal on the part of the fathers, which is the case with most other missionaries, to swell the catalogue of converts to Christianity, being more solicitous to teach their trades to such as might choose to learn them. Adopting the idea of the humane and ingenious Count Rumford, their first great object seemed to be that of making men happy, that they might afterwards become virtuous, which is certainly much sounder philosophy, than the reverse of the proposition.

It would be supposed, that men like these, so truly respectable in their missionary character, and irreproachable in their conduct, would be well received and encouraged in any country; yet such is the brutality and gross depravity of the peasantry of this colony, that a party, consisting of about thirty, had entered into a confederacy to murder the three teachers, and to seize and force into their service all the young Hottentots that might be found at the place. These horrid wretches had actually assembled at a neighbouring house, on the Saturday evening, intending on the following day, in the middle

of divine service, to carry their murderous purposes into execution. Luckily for the missionaries, they had intimation of what was going on through a Hottentot, who deserted the service of one of the intended assassins for that purpose. They had laid their apprehensions before Sir James Craig, who, in consequence, issued his injunctions, in a letter to the overseer of the post of Zoete Melk valley, that no inhabitant should in any shape molest the Hernhüters, on pain of incurring the heaviest displeasure of the government. The letter arrived on the very day they were assembled, and the paltroons, on hearing it read, sneaked off each to his own home, and the missionaries since that time have continued to exercise their functions unmolested. The cause of the farmers' hatred to these people, is their having taught the Hottentots the use of their liberty, and the value of their labour, of which they had long been kept in ignorance.

At the point of a small detached mountain, to the southward of Bavian's kloof, is a warm spring, whose waters are pretty much used by invalids from the Cape. They are strongly chalybeate, like those near Olifant's river, and rise out of the same kind of black turfy ground, in which were large masses of a brown ponderous iron stone, that apparently contained from 60 to 70 per cent. of iron. The Dutch government had caused a house to be erected, for the accommodation of such as might be inclined to use the waters; which is now in so ruinous and filthy a state, that the appearance of it is much better calculated to hasten the progress of the disease, than the convalescence of the patient. Most of the English who have used the bath, have taken their lodgings at a farm house, about a mile from the wells, where there are comfortable accommodations for a

few persons. The temperature of the waters, where they first break out of the ground, is 114° of Fahrenheit, but in the bath they are reduced to 110°. They are chiefly recommended for rheumatic complaints and debilitated constitutions.

From the bath we proceeded to the westward, crossed a steep sandy hill, called the *Hou hoek*, and on the seventeenth, descended the Hottentot's Holland's kloof, a difficult pass across the great north and south chain of mountains, but infinitely less so than either the Duyvil's kop, or the Kayman's river.

From the portal, or entrance of the kloof, is a grand view of the Cape peninsula, the sweeping shores of the two great bays, and the intermediate dreary isthmus appearing like a sea of sand, and enlivened only by a few neat farm houses, scattered over the fore-ground, at the feet of the great chain of mountains. The middle of the isthmus is inhabited only by a few poor people, who gain a subsistence by collecting the stems and roots of the shrubs that grow in the sand, and sending them in small carts to the Cape, where they are sold for fuel. The distance from Hottentot's Holland's kloof to Cape Town, is about thirty-six miles, or an easy day's journey, which we made on the eighteenth of January; not sorry to have brought to an end a seven months' tour, in the course of which many personal inconveniences and difficulties had occurred, to be borne and surmounted only by a determination to gratify curiosity at the expense of comfort.

CHAP. VI.

Sketches on a Journey into the Country of the Namaaquas.

The breaking up of the south-east monsoon, which generally happens towards the end of April or the beginning of May, is a season of the year that, of all others, is worst calculated for undertaking a journey through the sandy deserts of Southern Africa. Should the change of the monsoon not have taken place when the traveller sets out, the long drought which always precedes it, will have parched up and destroyed vegetation to such a degree, that his cattle would be in danger of perishing from scarcity of food, and still more so from want of water: and, should the contrary be the case, he is equally unfortunate, as not only for some time he will find no pasturage, but must also have to contend with all the inconveniences of stormy weather, and perhaps be retarded for weeks together by the swelling of the rivers.

Weighty as these objections appeared to be, it was thought expedient to commence a journey to the northern parts of the colony, along the western coast, at the very moment when the breaking up of the summer monsoon was expected. It was the tenth of April when I set forward from Cape Town, with a covered waggon, and twelve stout oxen, in good condition, a single horse, a slave, a waggoner, and leader, who had accompanied me

on the other journies, and an additional Hottentot to attend the oxen for relays: for it must not be supposed, that the same team of oxen should be able to draw daily for a length of time. The farmers, who live only at the distance of ten days' journey from the Cape, seldom come up with less than a couple of teams of bullocks to use alternately. They also travel at nights, for the sake of coolness, and that their cattle may graze or browse during the day.

But for the better convenience of those who travelled on the public service, government imposed a kind of tax on the farmers, by obliging them to furnish *Voorspans*, or gratuitous teams of oxen, whenever they should be demanded. It was considered as a sufficient recompense for this service, that they were supplied by the government, without any expense to themselves, with powder and ball to carry on their expeditions against their enemies, the Bosjesmans. In the present, as well as on the former tour, I availed myself of this privilege of ancient usage in the colony, and never met with a refusal, or even a reluctant compliance with the demand, which, indeed, was always requested not as a matter of right, but of favour.

None of my Hottentots being acquainted with one step of the northern tour I was about to undertake, we had to depend entirely on the information of the farmers as to the road and most convenient halting places. The first day brought us to *Koeberg*, about eighteen miles from the Cape; and the second to *Groene kloof*, about sixteen miles farther of deep sandy road, a hard day's drag for a dozen oxen.

Groene kloof is a division of the Cape district, consisting of several clumps of small hills, that cross the sandy slip, extending along the western coast. On the dales that lie within these hills are copious springs of good water, and excellent pasturage for cattle and horses. None of the ground near the Cape can be considered as remarkably productive in grain; it requires manure, or to lie fallow for two or three years, and even then affords nothing that in England would be considered as a crop. It appears from the returns of grain, which the farmers are obliged to deliver annually to government, that the average product is under tenfold. In places close to the town, the returns are much less, the ground being worn out by a continual succession of crops of grain.

Among the hills of Groene kloof, are considerable numbers of Steenboks, Duykers, and Reeboks, and a few Hartebests, but frequent visits of sportsmen from the Cape have made them very shy. Hares, korhaens, grous, and partridges, were sufficiently plentiful. Various species of the liliaceous tribe, particularly of the amaryllis, and other bulbous rooted plants, were now in bloom, but the long drought had left little verdure on the sides of the hills. At this season of the year that refreshing tint is only to be looked for in the neighbourhood of springs and rivulets.

The house of Slabert, the *Tea fontein*, is the next usual stage beyond Groene kloof. As this family holds a distinguished place in the page of a French traveller in Southern Africa, the veracity of whose writings have been called in question, curiosity was naturally excited to make some inquiries from them concerning this author. He was

well known to the family, and had been received into their house at the recommendations of the fiscal; but the whole of his transactions in this part of the country, wherein his own heroism is so fully set forth, they assert to be so many fabrications. The story of shooting the tiger, in which his great courage is contrasted with the cowardice of the peasantry, I read to them out of his book. They laughed very heartily, and assured me that although the story had some foundation in fact, the animal had been shot through the body by a *stell roar* or trap-gun, set by a Hottentot, and was expiring under a bush at the time they found it, when the valiant Frenchman discharged the contents of his musquet into the tiger and dispatched him. The first book which he published, of his Travels to the Eastward, contains much correct information, accurate description, and a number of pointed and just observations. The sale of the copy of this encouraged the making of a second, the materials of which, slight as they were, seem to have chiefly been furnished by the publication of an English traveller, whom he pretends to correct; and, from an account of an expedition to the northward, sent out by the Dutch government of the Cape in search of a tribe of people reported to wear linen clothing. The fact seems to be this: that he left *Zwartland* in July, travelled to the Orange river, and returned at the beginning of the following December, at which time he is conducting his readers to the northward, as far as the tropic. The inventive faculties of the Abbé Philippo, who is the real author of the work, supplied what he conceived to be wanting in the traveller's remarks, and in the two above-mentioned publications.

From the house of Slabert we crossed the country to Saldanha bay, which, as a spacious, secure, and

commodious sheet of inland sea water, for the reception of shipping, can scarcely perhaps be equalled in any part of the world. It extends in length near fifteen miles, in the direction of the coast, which is about north by east, and south by west; and the entrance into it is near the northern end, through a ridge of granite hills, moderately high. In this entrance are three rocky islands, two of which, named Jutten and Malagas, are partly without; and the third of flat naked rock, called Marcus, is directly in the mouth of the passage, about three quarters of a mile from the northern, and a little more than a mile from the southern points of land, forming the entrance. These and the island being once fortified, would render the bay inaccessible to an enemy's fleet. To the southward of the entrance, and within the bay, are two other islands, called the Schaapen and the Mewen. Between these is a narrow passage into the south angle of the bay, which is called the Laguna, or lake, where cutters, schooners, fishing ships, and all kind of small craft, to almost any amount, might lie as securely as in a dock. On the north side of these two islands is also good and safe anchorage for large ships; and it was here that the squadron of Admiral Lucas was lying, when captured by that of Sir George Elphinstone.

But the northern part of Saldanha bay, distinguished by the name of Hootjes bay, affords the most eligible, convenient, and secure anchorage for large shipping, being land-locked and sheltered from all winds. There is also a very excellent landing-place near a mass of granite rock, which is convertible into a commodious pier. The western shore of Hootjes bay is skirted by a range of granite rocks, along the sides of which shipping might be hove down to repair, the water being four fathoms deep close in with the rocks. The Dutch ship Middle-

burg, that was set on fire when Commodore Johnstone appeared off the bay, went down with her sides just touching these rocks, where she now lies under water as if alongside a quay.

The entrance of Saldanha bay lies in latitude 33° 10′ south, longitude 18° east, and the distance from Table bay is eighteen leagues north by west. About nine leagues to the southward of the entrance is a low flat island, not many miles from the main land, called Dassen island, which is said to be constantly covered with rabbits and penguins. The former may generally be taken with great ease; for on the appearance of people on the island, the penguins take possession of the rabbit holes, to the exclusion of the rightful owners. Saldanha bay, the shores of Dassen island, and Robben island, in the mouth of Table bay, abound with the different kinds of fish peculiar to this part of the world. Saldanha bay, in the winter season, is frequented by vast numbers of the black whale. At this time they were just beginning to set in. A whaler that had entered the bay, on trial, found no difficulty in picking up a large fish every day.

From the many conveniences that Saldanha bay possesses, as a secure harbour for shipping, at all seasons of the year, where they may be repaired, and even built, must, on the other hand, be deducted very serious disadvantages, without the removal of which it will ever be prevented from becoming the general rendezvous of a fleet; these are the want of food and of fresh water.

The first might indeed be supplied, to a certain degree, from the adjacent country. In the sand hills, that surround a part of the bay, grow several

kinds of shrubby plants, whose long and thick roots are easily drawn out of the loose sand, and in such abundance, as scarcely to be credited.—They form a kind of subterranean forest. The sides of the hills also, and the extensive plains, are covered with frutescent plants. Was the country planted with the oak, poplar, silver tree, and others that grow near the Cape, plenty of firewood might, in a very few years, be furnished for any number of shipping that would ever frequent the bay.

The scarcity of water is a much more serious evil than that of wood, and perhaps more difficult to obviate. There are two small springs towards the south end of the bay, but the water of both is slightly impregnated with salt. The farmers seem to have no idea of digging wells, or of opening a spring to let it run; on the contrary, the usual practice is that of making a large dam close to the spring: by so doing, they expose a greater surface to the action of the sun, which is certainly an unwise measure, on a soil so strongly impregnated with saline substances, and in a climate where evaporation is so powerfully carried on. On a trial being made, by order of the late Admiral Sir Hugh Christian, to obtain water by digging near the landing-place of Hootjes bay, a mass of granite rock, of a steel blue colour, was entered to the depth of thirty or forty feet, and the small quantity of water that oozed through the seams, was found to be impregnated with salt.

The best method of supplying water at the bay, seems to be that of bringing it in leaden pipes from a copious elevated spring, about six miles to the northward of Hootjes bay. This spring, at Witte Klip, or the white rock, appears to be quite suffi-

cient for every purpose, and the expense of conveyance would be moderate, at least of little consideration, when compared with the magnitude of the object.

It was a favourite subject of conversation with the late Colonel Gordon, and some other Dutch gentlemen, to turn the course of the Berg river into Saldanha bay, by which they would not only furnish a plentiful supply of water for a town, garrison, and shipping, but would, at the same time, open a navigation into the interior of the country, particularly into Zwartland, the granary of the colony. Such a scheme would, no doubt, be practicable, though that part of it which regards the supply of a fleet and town with fresh water, would perhaps fail to answer the purpose, for the following reasons: That part of the Berg river, where it would be the most practicable to turn its course, is within a mile or two of the place to which the high spring tides flow, and about twenty miles from the present mouth of the river in St. Helena bay. The distance from the same place, along the line in which the new channel would be carried to Saldanha bay, is about five and twenty or perhaps thirty miles. Allowing for the circuitous course of the river in its present channel, and considering the bays of Saldanha and St. Helena to have the same difference of level with the place at which the river is proposed to be turned, the general current in the new would be the same as that in the present channel, and this is so very trifling, that, let there be given in the new one a fall as little as possible at the first, and as great as possible near the bay, the tide would nevertheless set up it for many miles, and render the water completely salt. Were a canal made to terminate in an open bason near the bay,

there is reason to think that, without a current, it would constantly be choaked up with the immense volumes of sand that are shifting and rolling over the level surface whenever the winds blow strong.

The general surface of the country, between the Berg river and Saldanha bay, is flat and sandy, exhibiting, however, a continued forest of shrubbery. It is very thinly inhabited, on account of the scarcity of fresh water. The ground, however, is uncommonly fertile. The usual returns on wheat are from fifteen to twenty fold. Barley yields from thirty to forty. They use no manure, and in some places the soil is so loose and sandy, that the operation of ploughing is unnecessary. Garden plants of all kinds thrive remarkably well. It is curious enough to see pumpkins, melons, cauliflowers, and other vegetables, growing luxuriantly in sheer sand. At one place they were rooting out sugar canes, that had overspread a garden, to give place for a plantation of tobacco. The greasy appearance, and the adhesive quality, of the sandy soil that covers the surface of this part of the country, are probably loamy or marly particles that render it so particularly favourable to vegetation. From the chalky masses of stone that lie at certain depths under, and sometimes appear above, the sandy surface, may perhaps be disengaged, by some simple or combined action of the air and the saline bodies in the sand, that species of aeriform acid contained in chalk, which late experiments have shown to be the kind of aliment most congenial to the nature of plants.

Notwithstanding the fertility of the ground, and the facility of tillage, a very inconsiderable quantity of grain is produced, owing to the distance and

heavy roads to the only market in the colony. Draught oxen are scarce and dear in the neighbourhood of the Cape, and vast numbers are annually destroyed, in transporting the articles of necessary consumption to Cape Town. There is a curious paragraph in the Minutes of the Proceedings in the Government of Van Riebeek, the founder of the colony, which shows the extreme scarcity of cattle in the early stages of the settlement, before some daring adventurers penetrated beyond the great ranges of mountains. It states, that the captains of four English ships having arrived in the bay and presented the governor and council with pipes, glasses, brandy, and other acceptable articles, the governor in council resolved, in order to show that the Hollanders were not wanting in gratitude and civility, that the ox belonging to the Company, which had died, not of disease, but from hunger, should be divided into four quarters, and that one should be sent to the captain of each ship.

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The bay of St. Helena is about fifteen miles over a sandy slip of land, to the northward of Hootjes bay. It resembles Table bay, than which it is a little more open and exposed to the northerly and north-westerly winds, but has much clearer anchorage. There is a small spring of fresh water at the point of the hilly peninsula that runs along the coast from Saldanha bay. The Berg river, though an immense mass of water, is so sanded up at the mouth, that boats can enter it only at high water. There still remain a few Hippopotami towards the lower part of this river, but they are very shy, and come up at nights only, to the place where the water begins to be fresh. The Dutch government, in order to preserve this animal in the colony, imposed a fine of a thousand guilders on any person that should

put one of them to death. Game of every kind is very plentiful towards the mouth of the river. The two large antelopes, the hartebest, and the gemsbok, are occasional visitors of this part of the country.

At the distance of fifteen miles from the mouth of the river, I crossed it in a boat, and floated over the waggon with a cask. The road on the opposite side was so heavy, and so great the extent of country uninhabited, on account of the deep sandy surface, and scarcity of water, that it was dark before the waggon could arrive at the place where it was proposed to halt for the night. The driver, though an inhabitant of the country, lost his way over the uniform surface of sand and bushes; and we were three hours dragging backwards and forwards before the house could be discovered; though close upon it the whole time. It was a wretched hovel of rushes, standing in the midst of a sandy plain. The night was very cold, and there was neither food nor shelter for the horses, nor water for the cattle. The shifting of the sand-drifts had choaked up the briny spring, and the inhabitants had been obliged for some time to fetch their water from the Berg river, a distance at least of twelve miles. At the hazard, therefore, of losing our way a second time, I determined to proceed to the next habitation, which was said to be about four miles farther. On arriving there, at midnight, it was found to be very little better than the other. The marks of extreme poverty appeared on the house and its inhabitants. A cow or two, a little corn, a few sheep and goats, constituted the whole of their possessions. Yet these are in much better circumstances than the generality of the peasantry of Europe, having the benefit of a climate that requires

little clothing, and no artificial heat, both of which are absolutely necessary in most countries of the latter; and they may here, at all times, procure abundance to satisfy the cravings of nature.

It was on these miserable plains that the Abbé de la Caille terminated the measurement of his base from the Cape, in order to ascertain the length of a degree of the meridian in the southern parallels of latitude. Respecting this great mathematician and astronomer, and his arduous undertaking, the learned author of a Mathematical Dictionary, lately published, has the following remark: "Having thus executed the purpose of his voyage, and "no present opportunity offering for his return, he "thought of employing the vacant time in another "arduous attempt; no less than that of taking the "measure of the earth, as he had already done that "of the heavens. This, indeed, had been done "before by different sets of learned men, both in "Europe and America; some determining the "quantity of a degree at the equator, and others at "the arctic circle; but it had not as yet been de"cided, whether in the southern parallels of lati"tude the same dimensions obtained as in the "northern. His labours were rewarded with the "satisfaction he wished for, having determined a "distance of 410614 feet from a place called *Klip* "*fontayn* to the Cape, by means of a base of 38808 "feet three times actually measured; whence he "discovered a new secret of nature, namely, that "the radii of the parallels in south latitude, are "not the same length as those of the correspond"ing parallels in north latitude."

If the observations of the Abbé be correct, and I believe they have never been called in question, the

result of them, giving a larger bulk to the southern hemisphere of the earth than to the northern, may, perhaps, be sufficiently satisfactory to account for the equipoise of the globe without having recourse to a *southern continent*, which many learned and ingenious gentlemen imagined to exist, in order to counterbalance the great quantity of mountainous land in high northern latitudes.

The oxen for relays having followed the waggon close, without the Hottentot who had the charge of them, his companions began to grow uneasy about him. Having had a violent headache the preceding evening, occasioned by repletion, he had asked me for an emetic. At first he took three grains of tartarized antimony, which produced no effect. In the course of half an hour, I gave him three more without success. The third time he swallowed a double dose, which answered the purpose. His companions concluded that he must have died on the road from the effect of the medicine, and were continually repeating in my hearing, that it was pity I had given him so much. Though perfectly at ease myself with respect to any harm that would come to the Hottentot, having had former experience of the strength of their stomachs, yet it was no easy matter to convince the rest of it; and his absence was also a very serious inconvenience. In the morning, however, he made his appearance. He had fallen asleep, it seemed, about the middle of the preceding day, and had not awakened till night. Though very dark and unacquainted with a single step of our route, he had found us by following the tract of the waggon. At this sort of business a Hottentot is uncommonly clever. There is not an animal among the numbers that range the wilds of Africa, if he be at all acquainted with its

the print of whose feet he cannot distinguish. And though the marks by which his judgment is directed be very nice, they are constant in animals in a state of nature, whereas domesticated animals are liable to many accidental variations. He will distinguish the wolf, for instance, from the domestic dog, by the largeness of the ball of the foot, and the comparative smallness of the toes. The print of any of his companions' feet he would single out among a thousand. The peasantry are also tolerably expert in tracing game by the marks of their feet; it is, in fact, a part of their education. An African boor gains a sort of reputation by being clever *op het spoor*. This is the method by which, on moonlight nights, they hunt down the poor Bosjesmans.

At the eastern extremity of the sandy plain, I was fortunate enough to procure fresh oxen, to enable me to pass the northern point of the *Picquet berg*, a clump of mountains probably so named from their position in front of the great chain. Grain, fruit, good tobacco, and a limited number of cattle, are the produce of the farms, at the foot of these mountains. At one place they were distilling an ardent spirit of no disagreeable flavour, from water-melons, the largest I remember to have ever seen.

The deep sandy plains were succeeded by still deeper sandy hills, over which the waggon made but very slow progress, the wheels sinking to the axes every moment. These hills, or rather mountains, of sand, extended near thirty miles beyond the point of the Picquet berg, before they attained their greatest elevation, where a very curious and grand spectacle presented itself. Along the summit, which was several miles in width, and the length

from north to south bounded only by the horizon, rose out of the coarse crystallized sand and fragments of sandstone, a multitude of pyramidal columns, some of which were several hundred feet in diameter, and as many in height; these, viewed from a distance, had the regular appearance of works of art. The materials were also sandstone, bound together by veins of a firmer texture, containing a portion of iron. The cavernous appearance of these peaked columns, that had hitherto withstood, though not entirely escaped, the corroding tooth of time, and the vicissitudes of devouring weather, proclaimed their vast antiquity; and the coarse sand in which their bases were buried, and the fragments of the same material that were scattered over the surface, and not yet crumbled away, were sufficiently demonstrative that these pyramids had once been united, making at that time one connected mountain, similar to the great northern range. Out of the mouldered remains of these mountains had been formed the interior hills of sand, while the finer particles, wafted by the winds and the torrents, have rested on the plains that stretch along the sea coast. The united streamlets of water among these hills compose a sheet of considerable extent, called the *Verlooren valley*, or the Forlorn lake. It had some resemblance to the Knysna, near Plettenberg's bay, but was totally devoid of the appendages that beautify the latter. Instead of green knolls, skirted and capped by forest trees, the Forlorn lake was surrounded by barren mountains of sand, crowned with masses of naked rock. The margin of the lake, however, was belted with good ground, and seemed to be tolerably well inhabited.

It was three long days' journies before the hills of sand were left behind, and a new sort of coun-

try, still sandy, presented along the banks of the *Olifant*, or Elephant's river, which, like the Berg, is one of the few rivers in the colony that is never entirely dried up. It receives a constant supply from the numerous rills that descend from the great northern chain of mountains, along the feet of which it flows, till their discontinuance in a connected range, between the thirty-first and thirty-second degree of latitude. Here they branch out into a number of rugged hills and detached masses, till at length they mingle with the Karroo plains. After the breaking up of the chain of mountains, the Elephant's river turns off to the westward, and falls into the sea, in latitude 31½° north. The mouth of this river is contracted, rocky, and shallow, and seldom safe to be entered by boats. Within, it is navigable near thirty miles up the country, which is, however, wild, and almost uninhabited, owing to the scarcity of fresh water.

The banks of the river, where we crossed it, afforded several very excellent farms. The rice that was produced here was a large heavy grain, and white as snow. The multitude of birds attracted by this grain, requires a number of people to guard it from them. The small *Loxia Astrild* is particularly troublesome. The immense flocks of this species of Grossbeak may in some degree be conceived, from the circumstance of three-and-sixty having been shot at one discharge of a small fowling-piece.

On the twenty-first I attempted, with sixteen fresh oxen in the waggon, to cross the great chain of mountains; which was effected in about eight hours. The passage had not been made at this place for a length of time by any waggon, yet as the usual circuitous road would have occasioned the

loss of a whole day, I considered it as an object worth the trial.

This part of the chain of mountains was exceedingly grand and lofty, and the road that serpentized through the lower passes, between the high points, was dreadfully steep and rocky. On approaching the summit, the same kind of pyramidal remains made their appearance, in the midst of a surface of sand and fragments of rock. These peaks were some of them a thousand feet high, and of such vast bulk, that each might be considered as a separate mountain. They form the very highest ridge of the great chain, but the general summit to be passed over, in the approach to them, was at least five miles in width. The grotesque manner in which the resisting fragments grew out of this surface; or, rolling from the upper ridges, had tumbled on each other, forming natural chambers, arches, colonnades, and *Stonehenges*, to the magnitude of which, that on Salisbury Plain would appear but as a cottage by the side of that city's great cathedral; all of these so wasted, and corroded, and cavernous, the skeletons only of what they once were, struck the mind with the same kind of melancholy awe, that the contemplation of the remains of ancient grandeur generally inspires. Waiting in the midst of these antique ruins, the mind was in vain busied in trying to form some estimation of the measure of time that had passed away in effecting the general depression of the mountain, and equally vain was it to attempt a calculation, in how many ages yet unborn, the stupendous masses, of at least a thousand feet high, of solid rock, would dissolve, and "leave not a rack "behind."

It could be at no loss, however, to comprehend, whence proceeded the sandy plains that stretched

along the western coast of this country, to a distance yet untravelled. This range of mountains alone, taken at two hundred miles in length, five miles in width, and the general depression at a hundred feet only, would have supplied materials to cover uniformly to the depth of three feet, a plain of thirty-three thousand square miles. A farther idea suggested itself, that all the sand of the sea shores probably owed its origin to the remains of worn-down mountains, scattered by the winds, and borne down by torrents into the "bosom of the deep," and thence thrown back upon its shores. This theory seems to be established by facts. In Africa the whole coast is sand, from the Cape of Good Hope to the Gulph of Benin, under the equinoctial line, an extent through which it is more than probable, the stratified mountains of sand-stone continue to run; whilst, on the opposite continent, the rocky shore extends from the line to the southernmost Cape, because the whole of the mountains there are composed of durable granite. Geological observations on the gradual decay, or rather mutation of superficial form of this our habitable earth, leaves a doubt on the unprejudiced and unshackled mind, of the idea of the popular Jewish notion, that would limit its creation to the short period of six thousand years. The human mind appears lost and bewildered in attempting to form any conception of a beginning of the existence of matter, or of aught antecedent to it.

On approaching the upper part of the mountains, the weather became suddenly boisterous, and to a perfect calm and mild atmosphere succeeded, in the course of a few hours, a violent hurricane that roared through the vaulted rocks, and a cold and piercing air. Yet in this elevated situation, a small

spring of water had tempted a peasant to erect his cottage, around which was just as much ground as was sufficient to afford a supply of bread to its possessor. Solitary and wretched as the hovel appeared to be, it was crowded with persons of both sexes, in the height of gaiety. The owner of the place had just returned from the Cape, and had brought with him a supply of brandy, with which they were making merry. The poorest peasant, on his annual visit to the Cape, never fails to lay in, among other articles of purchase, a cask of *sopie*, and this has little rest day or night till it be exhausted. Friends and strangers are equally welcome to it as long as it will run. Among the present company were two men whom, from their countenances, I could perceive to be Europeans. They had been long enough in the country to forget their own language, but not to have learned that of the Dutch, so that in fact they scarcely had the means of making themselves intelligible to any one. The one was an Irishman, the other English, and both were probably deserters from the army or the navy. The first had taken up the profession of a *water-wyzer*, or discoverer of water, and had shown sagacity enough to establish a sort of reputation in the country. By speaking little, looking wise, and frequent application to the eye of a double convex lens, which happened to have an air-bubble within it, he had practised with great success on the credulity and ignorance of the Dutch farmers, and had obtained from them, by this and other means, a pair of horses, and several hundred rixdollars of paper money. Lighting their pipes at the sun by means of his glass, and the persuasion that the air-bubble within it was a drop of water that possessed the sympathetic quality of always turning towards its kindred element, had such an irresistible effect on the rude minds of the Afri-

can boors, that the Irishman, like a true quack, appreciated his consequence so highly, that he never deigned to pay a visit to any farmer, in order to examine the state of his water, without a previous fee. Observing me laugh at the credulity of the people gaping at his mountebank tricks, he took occasion to speak to me apart, begging, for God's sake, I would not detect the imposture, as he was now in such good practice that he was able to keep an assistant. Surprise ceases at the credulity of men born and educated in the wilds of Africa, on reflecting to what extent the impostors of Europe have succeeded, in living upon the folly of those who have been weak enough to listen to them.—Animal magnetism has raised many a quack to a state of grandeur, at the expense of credulity; and the nonsense of the *virgula divinatoria*, or divining rod, has still its votaries.

There never perhaps were a set of men so void of resources in overcoming difficulties as the Dutch farmers of the Cape. The inanity of mind, and the indolent habit of body, are not even surmounted by self-interest. Their ignorance cannot be a matter of wonder, but we often find in Europe unlettered men possessed of great talents and ingenuity. No printing-press has yet found its way to the Cape of Good Hope, except a small one for cards or handbills. They contrive, indeed, to publish a sort of almanac, but that of the current year has somewhat suffered in its reputation, by having stated an eclipse of the moon to fall on the day preceding the full, and to be invisible, when, unluckily for the almanac-maker, it happened at its proper time, visible, and nearly total.

The descent to the eastern plain was several hundred feet less than had been the ascent of the op-

posite face of the mountain. The country was now rough and stony, bounded by a high ridge of wall-sided rock, from five hundred to a thousand feet in height. The summit was a broad belt, of that kind of surface formerly spoken of under the name of Karroo. A partial elevation still higher than this surface, is called the Bokkeveld's mountain, and resembles, in its appearance and produce, the mountains of Sneuwberg. In ascending the Bokkeveld, the south-east monsoon threatened a change. The wind having blown strong from that quarter for three days, suddenly changed to the northward, and the contention produced incessant peals of thunder the whole day, heavy rain, and the largest hail-stones I ever saw. Some of them measured six-tenths of an inch in diameter; and a peasant who lived on the highest part, asserted that they fell near his house as large as pullets' eggs. On the weather clearing up at night, the temperature of the air had decreased from 78° at noon, to 40° of Fahrenheit's Scale.

In the course of a very few days after the rain, the surface of the Bokkeveld became one verdant carpet of herbaceous plants, embroidered by a multitude of the humble, yet beautiful, *Oxalis*, some red, some white, and others yellow. Game of most kinds is very abundant in this district, particularly hares, bustards, and partridges, which we daily saw in thousands; and they were so very tame, that we had no difficulty in procuring whatever quantity we wished for.

The division of *Onder*, or lower Bokkeveld, being the remotest in the colony on this side, and bordering on the country inhabited by those Maroon Hottentots, called Bosjesmans, it became necessary, in order to proceed to the northward, to make

an addition to my people, not only as a protection against the savages, but as guides over an uninhabited desert of the same nature as the great Karroo leading to Graaff Reynet. *Louw*, the *Veld Commandant*, readily offered his services, but he was totally unacquainted with the desert that skirted his district. A Hottentot, however, was soon found, to whom were known all the places where water was most likely to be met with, and he was glad of the occasion to act as guide.

Having mounted a second waggon to carry the necessary provisions and grain for our horses, we set forward at an early hour in the morning, in order to arrive at the steep edge of the mountain before dark. From this precipice, which in many parts is not less than two thousand feet, the Karroo plains beneath appeared as a vast sea, and the horizon was interrupted only by a few distant hills, rising out of the dreary waste like so many islands. We descended the precipice where it was least steep, and having reached in safety the bottom, just before dark, we yoked fresh oxen into the waggons, and launched forth upon the desert. About midnight we halted upon the Thorn river, which unexpectedly ran in a considerable stream, but the water was salt as brine. A spring near the river called the *Stink fonteyn*, threw out water that was saline to the taste, and had a most disgusting fetid smell. The thunder storm and heavy rain, that for a whole day had continued on the Bokkeveld, had not extended to the Karroo. The surface was dry and dusty, as in the middle of summer, and the few shrubby plants that are peculiar to this sort of country, generally of the succulent kind, were so parched and shrivelled, that vegetation seemed for a length of time to have been suspended.

We were here visited by a party of Bosjesmans, headed by a captain or chief. This man was well known to the commandant, having been of signal service to him in expeditions against his own countrymen, whose marauding way of life he had been prevailed upon to quit, with his whole horde; on the promise of pardon and protection of the government. It is now fifteen years since they had taken up their abode on the edge of the Karroo, where they have lived peaceably and industriously ever since. He said that, by making proper overtures to his countrymen, he had no doubt but many hordes might be brought to live quietly in the service of the farmers, for that their distresses, in their present way of life, were great and grievous.

Early in the morning of the twenty-seventh, with fresh teams of oxen, we proceeded to cross the desert. The wind still continued at south-east, and the weather was remarkably warm for the season of the year, the thermometer standing at 59° at sun-rise, and at 80° in the middle of the day in the shade. The waggons raised a cloud of dust that was almost insupportable. Except one solitary ostrich, not a living creature of any kind appeared the whole day. Having travelled near eight hours, our Hottentot guide pointed out a place under a small clump of naked hills, where water, he said frequently lodged in the cavities of rocks. He called it the *Lieuw kuyl*, or Lions' den. After a long search, a little water was discovered in a cavernous rock fresh and sweet; and with this we replenished our vessels. Under one of the ridges of hills was a channel covered with small pebbly sand, which appeared in several places to have been scratched with hands in search of water; and thousands of the impressions of the feet of various antelopes,

qua-chas, and zebras, were marked on the sand, but none of lions, of which the name of the place seemed to imply it to have been the resort.

On the twenty-eighth we entered a narrow pass among the hills that lay behind the Lions' den, which hills are considered as the commencement of the Namaaqua country. The surface continued to be broken into hill and dale, but both were destitute of plants, except indeed that along the stony sides of most of the hills were growing vast multitudes of a tree as unsightly as it was curious. It was a species of the aloe, called by botanists the *Dichotoma*, from the division and subdivision of each branch into pairs. Each of these subdivisions is terminated by a tuft of leaves, and the whole forms a large hemispherical crown supported upon a tapering trunk, which is generally of large diameter, but short in porportion to the vast circumference of the crown. This has been said sometimes to amount to many hundred feet. The largest I met with was about one hundred feet. It is called in the country the *Kooker boom*, or quiver tree, its pithy branches being employed by the Bosjesmans Hottentots as cases for their arrows. In some of the passes of the hills were thinly scattered several species of the geranium, among which was one, whose branches were armed with strong spines; and also a tree *Cotyledon*, that appeared ancient and stunted like the artificial dwarf trees invented and cultivated by the Chinese.

Two mountain geese directed us by their flight to a spring of water, about twenty miles beyond the Lions' den. Though sufficiently copious for our wants, yet it was strongly impregnated with salt. Ten miles beyond this brought us to the bed

of the Hartebeest river, which, from the very lofty mimosas that skirted its banks, and entirely buried it within their extended branches, promised a plentiful stream. It happened, however, to be perfectly dry. The experiment of digging was made in the bed of the river, and at five feet under the pebbly and crystallized sand, the fragments apparently of decomposed granite, was a stream of clear fresh water; and from various experiments afterwards made in the sandy beds of the rivers of the Namaaqua country, I am inclined to think, that subterranean streams of water pass under most of them in this part of Africa.

Near this river was situated a Kraal or horde of Namaaqua Hottentots. Their flocks of sheep, brought in towards the evening, might perhaps amount to three thousand. They possessed also a few cattle, and a herd of small handsome goats, that were spotted like the leopard. The sheep were totally different from the breed usually met with in the colony. Instead of the short, broad, and curling tails of these, those of the Namaaquas were long and round like the common English sheep. The rams had small straight horns. The covering was short, straight, shining hair in general, spotted bay and white. These, in all probability, were the indigenous sheep of the country, the broad-tailed ones having been brought into the colony from the northward. The assertion of Monsieur Vaillant is without any kind of foundation, when he says, that broad-tailed sheep transplanted into the Namaaqua country lose that part of their character, and obtain long round tails. There are Dutch peasants who have lived in this country thirty years, yet have not a long-tailed sheep in their whole flock. I could have no conversation with these people

through the means of my Hottentots, the language spoken by one being perfectly unintelligible to the other; nor could they speak or understand a word of Dutch.

Our next encampment was at the house or hovel of a Dutch peasant, situated at the entrance of a narrow defile between two ranges of mountains. The figure that presented itself at the door truly represented a being of a different country from that which we had left behind. It was a tall old man, with a thin sallow visage, and a beard of dingy black, that extending to the eyes where it met the straggling hair of the forehead, obscured the face like a visor. Never was a finer figure for the inhabitant of a black tower or enchanted castle, in the page of a romance. Not accustomed to receive strangers, he seemed, on our arrival, to be somewhat agitated. In one corner of the chimney of his hovel, which consisted of one apartment, sat an old Hottentot woman, over whose head had passed at least a century of years. To her natural sallow complexion was superadded no small quantity of soot, so that she was at least as black as her bearded master. A female slave next made her appearance, of a piece with the two former. The faggot presently crackled on the hearth; a quarter of a sheep was laid on the coals to broil; and the repast was speedily served up on the lid of an old chest, for want of a table, and covered with a remnant of the same piece of cloth worn as a petticoat by the female slave, which, it seemed not unlikely, had also once been employed in the same sort of service.

It turned out in conversation, that the old gentleman had long resided in this sequestered spot far

removed from all society; without wife or child, relation or friend, and any human being to converse with or confide in, except the old Hottentot and the slave, who were his only inmates, and a tribe of Hottentots in straw huts without. With the appearance of wretchedness and extreme poverty, he possessed immense herds of sheep and cattle, and had several large sums of money placed out at interest. He was literally what the world has properly called a miser. In justice, however, to the old man, he was one of the civilest creatures imaginable. On our return we were much indebted to him for the assistance of his cattle, which he very obligingly sent forward to fall in with our waggons on the midst of the Karroo desert.

It is singular enough, that a brother and a sister of this man, both old, and both unmarried, should each have their habitations in separate and distant corners of these mountains, and live, like him, entirely in the society of Hottentots; they are nearly related to one of the richest men in the Cape.

On the twenty-ninth we crossed a chain of mountains to the west, and proceeding to the northward between it and another much higher, we came at night to the head of the defile where it was found impracticable for the waggons to make any farther progress. We therefore encamped near a clear and copious spring of water, called the *Fleuris fonteyn*. The mountains, within the defiles of which we now were, are called in the Namaaqua language, the *Khamies*, signifying the cluster or aggregate. That which headed the several passes, or where as a centre they all terminated, was a very high peak, not less than four thousand feet above the plain, on the western side, that sloped gently to the sea-shore.

These mountains, in their nature and composition, differed from all others in the colony. Except the high point just mentioned, they were neither peaked, nor tabular, nor stratified, but were composed of large rounded masses of granite, a whole mountain sometimes consisting only of one naked rock. To two of this sort, from their similarity to those remarkable stones already noticed under the names of the Pearl and the Diamond, but ten times their size, as a point of distinction in the chart, I gave the name of the Namaaqua Pearls.

The loose fragments of stone on the sides of the Khamies berg, whether detached pieces of granite, or greasy quartz, or flinty pebbles, had almost invariably that side which lay next the ground, tinged of a blue or green colour, most frequently the latter. The veins that ran through the mountainous masses of granite, were generally filled with semi-transparent quartz, among which were both metallic crystalizations and arborizations. In several places were curious flat rocks, coloured red and yellow which might be taken up in such large flags, and were so easily cut with a knife, that they had obtained the name of plank-stone. In the veins of this stone were also metallic plates of a pyramidal form, and a greenish colour. All these appearances indicated the existence of abundance of copper in the Khamies berg. In fact, this is the commencement of what are called the Copper mountains, from the quantity of Malachite that is said to be strewed over their surface. In these mountains is also found, in large blocks, that species of stone to which mineralogists in Europe have given the name of Prehnite. It possesses most of the characters of Zeolite; but having some others from which it differs, it was considered as a new species. Some speci-

mens are extremely beautiful; they are generally of an apple-green ground, marked with white, pale yellow, or brown stripes, or spots. The only use or ornament to which the Dutch apply this stone, is to convert it into tobacco pipes, a purpose to which it is least suited, as the heat soon destroys the colours, and, if carried to redness, the form also; for like Zeolite it possesses the character of intumescence by strong heat. It might be manufactured into vases, little inferior to the Derbyshire spar, which, though much less esteemed than it deserves, because too common, has certainly no rival in the lapidary's workshop.

We attempted to ascend the highest point of the Khamies berg on horseback, but before we had gained the general summit out of which it rises, we were buried in a thick mist, which shortly became heavy rain; and the thermometer from 51° at the bottom of the mountain, had descended to 34°.

We took shelter in the solitary hovel of a Dutch peasant, that stood on the general summit of the mountain. Cold as it was, the man and his family had no other habitation than a hut made of rush matting, and fashioned after the manner of the Namaaquas, which will presently be noticed. Though rich as to the number of his sheep and cattle, he could have no other comfort in life, except, like the miser at the foot of the mountain, the gratification arising from knowing how much he was worth.—Fearful that the weather might become worse, and that, from the increasing cold, the rain might be converted into snow, we thought it prudent to give up the attempt of proceeding higher, and to make the best of our way down. It frequently happens that the snow begins to fall on this mountain early

in May. The inhabitants are then obliged to quit their elevated situation, and to establish themselves for the winter on the plains below. Neither the distance of the Khamies berg from the sea, which is only about fifteen miles, nor its height, are sufficient to account for the early approach of winter, and the deep snows that fall there. Perhaps, as this point is the termination of the periodical winds, and the commencement of those almost invariable breezes that blow between the tropics, and extend five or six degrees beyond them, called the trade winds, the frequent squalls and commotion in the air occasioned at the point of meeting, may have a tendency to lower the temperature. To the northward of the Khamies berg, on the sandy plains of the Namaaqua country, it is said that the rain never falls.—Whatsoever clouds may be borne from the sea, or formed in the atmosphere, are immediately attracted to this cluster of mountains.

In that part of the Namaaqua country, lying between the Khamies and the *Groote*, or *Orange river*, no water is met with, except in the periodical streams that flow from the mountain under beds of sand, in which the natives when such existed, used to dig deep wells, and cover them over to prevent evaporation. These plains are now desolate and uninhabited. All those numerous tribes of Namaaquas, possessed of vast herds of cattle, are, in the course of less than a century dwindled away to four hordes, which are not very numerous, and in a great measure are subservient to the Dutch peasantry, who dwell among them. The latter, who have seized upon the choicest part of their country, allow them to erect their huts in the neighbourhood of their farms, on condition of their furnishing a certain number of people to protect their cattle against

the attacks of the Bosjesmans, or wild beasts of prey. A dozen years more, and probably a shorter period, will see the remains of the Namaaqua nation in a state of entire servitude. Such are the effects of an encroaching peasantry, sanctioned by the low policy of a government that could descend to employ agents to effect the purchase of whole herds of cattle for a cask of brandy. To this government, was so little a concern of such great magnitude, that it authorized those agents, for the greater convenience of transporting their brandy, to make an expensive road across a point of the Khamies berg, which still bears the honourable name of the *Company's road.* The government having fixed no limits to their colony, nor their subjects to their avarice, the latter found it still more convenient to settle themselves in the midst of the harmless Namaaquas, who considered them as the most acceptable neighbours in the world. For a bottle of brandy, which cost sixpence, they willingly exchanged an ox; and such is still the infatuation of this people for the noxious liquor, that they will even now exchange a sheep for the same quantity of it.

How great soever may have been the avaricious designs of the first settlers of the Khamies berg, and the degree of blame imputable both to them and the government, it is but justice to remark, that the present inhabitants have much the appearance of being a harmless and honest set of people. Those heroes in infamy, whose characters, as drawn in the page of the French traveller before alluded to, seem not to be in the smallest degree overcharged, have most of them met the fate they so well deserved. *Pinaar,* and *Bernfry,* the Bastaards *Piet* and *Klaas,* and many others of the same stamp, have murdered one another, or have fallen by the hands of their own Hottentots.

Though the Namaaqua Hottentots vary but very little in their persons from the other tribes of this nation, their language is widely different. It is obviously, however, of the same nature, and abounds with the clapping of the tongue peculiar to the Hottentot. They are of a taller stature in general than the eastern tribes, and less robust. Some of the women were very elegant figures, and possessed a considerable share of vivacity and activity; and they had the same conformation of certain parts of the body as the Bosjesmans women, and other Hottentots; in a less degree, however, than is usual in the former, and more so than in those of the latter. Like the Hottentot women of the East, the most ornamental part of their dress was the little square leather apron, to which, in addition to the border of shells or beads, were appended six or eight chains in pairs, whose points dragged on the ground; the upper part of each chain was copper, the lower of polished iron. They are supplied to them by the *Damaras*, a tribe of people to the northward, who will shortly be noticed.

The huts of the Namaaquas differ very materially from those erected by the Hottentots of the colony, or by the Bosjesmans, or by the Kaffers. They are perfect hemispheres, covered with matting made of sedges; and the frame-work, or skeletons, are semicircular sticks, half of them diminishing from the centre or upper part, and the other half crossing these at right angles; forming thus a true representation of the parallels of latitude and meridians on an artificial globe. They are in general from ten to twelve feet in diameter; and so commodious, that many of the peasantry of the Khamies berg have adopted them.

These people, like the Kaffers, pay the greatest attention to their cattle; and, after the manner of that nation, they give to the horns of their oxen artificial directions, confining the shape generally to the spiral line, something like the Koodoo antelope. Those of the Khamies berg, in the possession both of Dutch and Hottentots, are large bony cattle, not in the least degree inferior to those of Sneuwberg. The people too in their persons are equally robust with those of Graaff Reynet. An old Namaaqua Hottentot woman is a figure that the most serious could not behold without laughter, and an old Dutch woman of this part of the country without pity, the first being remarkable for the prominences of the body, the latter from its want of points and uninterrupted rotundity. The breasts of the former are disgustingly large and pendant; the usual way of giving suck, when the child is carried on the back, is by throwing the breast over the shoulder. In this formation of their persons, they agree with the Latin Satirist's description of Ethiopian women on the borders of Egypt:

"In Meroe crasso majorem infante mamillam."

In the women of ancient Egypt, enormous protuberances of the body were very common, and have been attempted to be accounted for, by various authors, from a variety of causes. Though one of these may exist in the impurities of the water, yet the essential difference in the effect produced on a Hottentot and Dutch woman, shows different predispositions to exist inherent in the persons of each.

It should seem, however, that some principle does exist in these highly elevated situations of Southern Africa, that sheds its influence on the ani-

mal, and even on the vegetable part of the creation. The withered stem of a liliaceous plant, apparently the same as that found on the banks of the Orange river, was seven feet long, and crowned with an umbel of more than fifty flowrets, each having a peduncle or foot-stalk of eighteen inches in length, making the diameter of the umbel to exceed that of three feet. The bulb, of which I could but conveniently carry a few, was as large as the human head. Of this enormous lily the people gave an account, not unlike that of the fictitious Upas of Java, rendered famous by a relation of it inserted in the notes to Doctor Darwin's fanciful, yet classic, poem of the Botanic Garden. They say, with regard to the lily, that the juice of its bulb is a strong poison; that the leaves occasion sudden death to the cattle which may chance to eat them; and that if small birds should happen to perch on its blossoms, they instantly roll off lifeless to the ground. Another species of amaryllis, called by botanists *disticha*, common on all the mountainous parts of the colony, was now on the Khamies berg throwing out its long broad leaves in opposite pairs, forming the shape of a fan. Both the bulb, and the leaves of this plant, have been ascertained to be, without any preparation, most virulent poisons, that act on the animal system, whether taken into it by the stomach or the blood. The farmers pull up the root and leaves wherever they find them growing. It was said that the juice of this bulb, mixed up with the mangled body of a certain species of spider, furnishes the Bosjesmans with poison for their arrows, more deadly than any other they are acquainted with. This spider should seem to be peculiar to the western coast of the country, at least I never met with, nor heard of it, on the other side. Its body, with the legs, which are short, is three inches in diameter, the former black and hairy, the latter

faintly spotted; the back red. It lives under ground, constructing over its hole a cover composed of the filaments spun from its entrails, and earth or dung. This cover is made to turn on a joint. When the animal is watching for its prey, it sits with the lid half open, ready to sally out upon such insects as serve it for food. On the approach of danger it closes the cover, and in a short time cautiously opens it again to see if the enemy has retreated.

The Namaaqua Hottentots seem well acquainted with poisonous substances, though they now make use of none. The bow and arrow, their ancient weapons, are become useless. The country they now inhabit is almost entirely deserted by all kinds of beasts that live in a state of nature, and the dread of Bosjesmans prevents them from ranging far over the country in quest of game. Formerly, however, the kloofs of the Khamies berg abounded with elands and hartebeests, gemsboks, qua-chas, and zebras, and were not a little formidable on account of the number of beasts of prey that resorted thither. A few days before our arrival at the foot of the mountain, a lion had occasioned some little stir in the country, which had not yet entirely subsided. A Hottentot belonging to one of the farmers had endeavoured for some time, in vain, to drive his master's cattle into a pool of water inclosed between two ridges of rock, when at length he espied a huge lion couching in the midst of the pool; terrified at the unexpected sight of such a beast, that seemed to have its eyes fixed upon him, he instantly took to his heels, leaving the cattle to shift for themselves. In doing this he had presence of mind enough to run through the herd, concluding that if the lion should pursue, he might take up with the first beast that presented itself. In this, however, he was mistaken. The lion broke through

the herd, making directly after the Hottentot, who, on turning round, and perceiving that the monster had singled him out for a meal, breathless, and half dead with terror, scrambled up one of the tree Aloes, in the trunk of which had luckily been cut out a few steps, the more readily to come at some birds' nests that the branches contained. At the same moment the lion made a spring at him, but, missing his aim, fell upon the ground. In surly silence he walked round the tree, casting every now and then a dreadful look towards the poor Hottentot, who had crept behind some finches' nests that happened to have been built in the tree.

There is in this part of Africa a small bird of the Loxia genus, that lives in a state of society with the rest of its species, in the same manner as the locust-eating thrush mentioned in the account of a former journey. Like this bird too, they construct a whole republic of nests in one clump and under one cover. Each nest, however, has a separate entrance on the under side, and has no communication with its neighbour from within. Sometimes one of these clumps of nests will extend a space of ten feet in diameter, and contain a population of several hundred individuals. The aloe dichotoma, being the only plant met with on the hills of this country approaching to the size of a tree, except the mimosa, which grows only on the borders of periodical rivers, is generally the resort of these gregarious birds, where they construct their temporary dwellings, when nature calls upon them to fulfil the end of their creation.

It was on one of these edifices that the Hottentot screened himself from the sight of the lion. Having remained silent and motionless for a length of time, he ventured to peep over the side of the nest,

hoping that the lion had taken his departure; when, to his great terror and astonishment, his eyes met those of the animal, to use his own expression, "flashing fire at him." In short, the lion laid himself down at the foot of the tree, and stirred not from the place for four-and-twenty hours. He then returned to the spring to quench his thirst, and, in the mean time, the Hottentot descended the tree, and scampered to his home, which was not more than a mile distant, as fast as his feet could carry him.—The perseverance of the lion was such, that it appeared afterwards he had returned to the tree, and from thence had hunted the Hottentot by the scent within three hundred paces of the house.

It seems to be a fact well established, that the lion prefers the flesh of a Hottentot to that of any other creature. He has frequently been singled out from a party of Dutch. The latter being disguised in clothing, and the former going generally naked, may perhaps account for it. The horse, next to the Hottentot, seems to be his favourite food; but on the sheep, perhaps on account of his woolly covering, which he is too indolent to uncase, he seldom deigns to fix his paw.

From the Cape to the Khamies berg, very little occurs in the animal kingdom to interest the natural historian, especially one who may have made a previous journey to the eastward, where almost the whole tribe of quadrupeds peculiar to Southern Africa may be met with. In a Namaaqua hut I observed the skin of a Jackal, with a black bushy tail, that seemed to be different from any I had seen on the other side of the continent. It was covered with thick fur. The dogs of the Namaaquas were of the same sort as those of the Bosjesmans; and it was here observed of them, that their tails, contra-

ry to the description of Linnæus, given as the specific character to the domestic dog, were almost invariably recurved on the right side.

In our descent of the mountain, we were driven to seek shelter from the violence of the rain in a mixed horde of Bastaards and Namaaquas. The chief was of the former description. In his younger days he had been a great lover of the chase, and his matted hut within still displayed a variety of the skins of animals that had fallen before his piece. He boasted that, in one excursion, he had killed seven camelopardales and three white rhinoceroses. The latter is not uncommon on the skirts of the colony behind the Hantam mountain, and seems to be a variety only of the African two-horned rhinosceroses. It differs from it in colour, which is a pale carnation, in size, which is considerably larger, and in the thinness of its skin; all of which may perhaps be the effects of age. These people seemed to live very happily together. They had horses, and cattle, and sheep, and gardens of no inconsiderable extent, well stocked with pumpkins, onions, and tobacco.

We met also, at this kraal, one of the nation above mentioned under the name of Damaras. From his appearance I took him to be a Kaffer, and he was unquestionably of that race of people. He represented the Damaras as a very poor tribe; that their country along the sea-coast produced nothing for the support of cattle; and that their whole existence depended on exchanging copper rings and beads, which they themselves manufactured, with the *Briquas* to the east, and the Namaaquas to the south. From the Orange river to the Tropic, under which these people live, runs a chain of mountains, that, from the various accounts of travellers, are so abundant in copper ore, that it is every

where found upon the surface. From this ore, it seems the Damaras are in the art of extracting the pure metal. This man's account of the process of smelting the ore was as satisfactory as simple. They make a kind of charcoal from the wood of a certain mimosa, of which he gave me a large beam, by smothering it when burning clear, with sand. They break the ore into small pieces. Thus prepared, they lay the materials in alternate strata, within a small inclosure of stones, on a clayey bottom. They set fire to the charcoal, and blow it with several bellows, each made from the skin of a gemsbok converted into a sack, with the horn of the same animal fixed to one end for the pipe. This is all that is necessary to procure the metal from the sort of ore they make use of; being that species called by mineralogists vitreous copper ore. It is in fact mineralized with sulphur, which a moderate heat will dissipate, and leave the copper in its pure metallic state. Such sort of ore is even more fusible than pure copper. The metal thus obtained is then manufactured into chains, rings, and bracelets, by means of two pieces of stone that serve as a hammer and anvil, and the workmanship would be no disgrace to an artizan furnished with much better tools. The links of the chains, however, are all open, as well as the rings, which show that they have not yet discovered the art of soldering, or joining together pieces of the same metal by the interposition of a second, or a composition of a softer nature than those to be united.

As a nation of artists, and acquainted with metallurgy, they are, from all accounts, the poorest on the face of the earth. They keep no kind of cattle. Their country, in fact, is so totally barren and sandy, that no cattle could exist upon it. Though the Damaras are obviously the same race of people

as the Kaffers, and these, as has in a former chapter been conjectured, of Arabic origin, yet there is no necessity of tracing them back to a more refined nation, in order to account from whence they might have obtained the art of reducing copper ore into a metallic state. The accidental discovery is full as likely to have happened, as the Phenician story of the invention of glass related by Pliny.

The three tribes of Kaffers above-mentioned have each a different language, though they are all of the same nature, and have evidently been derived from the same source. This must be the case among every people who want a written character, especially when they become divided into tribes, and cease to communicate with each other. The different families of Hottentots all speak a different language, which, however, is very obviously perceived to have been derived from one common origin.

Having dried our clothes, we took leave of the kraal, and continued our descent of the mountain. It was night before we gained the plain, where we once more enjoyed a clear sky, and a brilliant moon. The following morning the thermometer was down to the freezing point, and the whole surface of the country was covered with a hoar frost.

From this place we made the best of our way to the Bokkeveld, returning nearly by the same route that had brought us to it. At the edge of the desert the Bosjesmans' captain paid us a second visit, with the people of his kraal, and a whole string of Namaaqua Hottentots, generally women, whose husbands and children were in the service of the Dutch farmers. One of these appeared to be the oldest woman I had ever beheld. Much more than

a century of years had certainly passed over her head. She produced her eldest daughter, who headed five generations. On being asked if her memory could carry her back to the time when the Christians first came among them, she replied, with a shake of the head, that she had very strong reasons to remember it, for that before she had ever heard of the Christians, she knew not the want of a bellyful, whereas it was now a difficult matter to get a mouthful. The condition of the whole horde certainly appeared to be very deplorable; but I feel a happiness in adding, that, by means of this captain and two or three well-disposed farmers, several hordes of the outcast Bosjesmans have since been brought in, and obtained by public subscription a considerable quantity of sheep and horned cattle, of which, it is to be hoped, they will speedily see their advantage in increasing the numbers; and one of that worthy and very useful fraternity of men, the Hernhüters, has voluntarily offered his services to go among the Bosjesman hordes, and endeavour to promote among them that sense of comfort, which has so effectually crowned their exertions in another part of the colony among the poor Hottentots, as has been noticed in the preceding chapter. Other members of societies, established principally with a view of propagating among savages the mild doctrines of Christianity, have also lately arrived in this colony, whose missions are particularly directed to the two nations of the Bosjesmans and the Kaffers; and though they perhaps may not make them readily comprehend the full intent and object of their mission, they will at least, by their mild and humane conduct, inspire them with a degree of confidence in men of a different complexion to themselves, and show them that the colony is now in the hands of a government that will no longer sanction the cruelties under which they have so long and lately groaned.

On the morning of the fifth of May, after dropping the commandant at his own house, I proceeded inland to the eastward, and, passing over a rough stony country, reached in two days the foot of the Hantam mountain. The inhabitants at this time were in a state of alarm, on account of the Bosjesmans. A party of these people had carried off into the kloofs of the mountains, several sheep and oxen, after severely wounding two Hottentots with poisoned arrows, one through the upper part of the arm, and the other in the ankle joint. The former seemed likely to do well, but the latter was in a very dangerous way. The point of the arrow had broken off and stuck into the bone. The leg was swollen as high as the knee, and gangrene appeared to have commenced round the wound. The people not knowing in what manner to treat it, I directed them to apply poultices of bread, onions, and oil, and to wash the wound well with a solution of *ammonia præparata*, and to give him plenty of vinegar to drink. At the end of four days, which it took me in rounding the mountain, the patient was no worse, but the wound on the contrary seemed to put on favourable appearances; the other was nearly well.

The Bosjesmans have been generally represented as a people so savage and blood-thirsty in their nature, that they never spare the life of any living creature which may fall into their hands. To their own countrymen, who have been taken prisoners by, and continued to live with the Dutch farmers, they have certainly shown instances of the most atrocious cruelty. These poor wretches, if retaken by their countrymen, seldom escape being put to the most excruciating tortures. The party abovementioned, having fallen in with a Hottentot at some distance from any habitation, set him up to the neck in a deep trench, and wedged him in so

fast with stones and earth that he was incapable of moving. In this situation he remained a whole night, and the greater part of the following day; when, luckily, some of his companions passed the place and released him. The poor fellow stated that he had been under the necessity of keeping his eyes and mouth in perpetual motion the whole day, to prevent the crows from devouring him.

The habitations that compose the division of the Hantam, lie scattered round the feet of that mountain. The face of the country is similar to that of the Sneuwberg, and the breed of cattle and of sheep are equally good; the horses in general much better, but they are subject to the same endemic disease that prevails in most parts of Graaff Reynet. It is here, however, very partial, for while it rages at the foot of the mountain, there is not the smallest danger on the flat summit, on which account this part of the mountain is appropriated to the public use, each inhabitant having the privilege of sending thither eight horses during the sickly season.

As in the Sneuwberg, they are here also very much infested with locusts. One troop of these insects, in their last stage of existence, passed on the wing along the eastern side of the mountain when we were encamped there. For several hours they continued to hover in the air as they passed along, at such a height as not to be individually distinguished; but their immense numbers formed a kind of fleecy cloud, that completely took off the radiated beams of the sun, and made it appear as when seen through a mist. Like a thin cloud also, they cast a confused shadow on the ground. In the Bokkeveld and the Khamies berg, for the two last years, these insects have been particularly troublesome. After repeated experiments to get rid of

them, they at last hit upon one that at least saved their corn. This they effected by making fires of sour acrid plants, by the smoke of which they were driven away; having, however, repeatedly extinguished the fires by the myriads that flew into them.

The Hantam mountain, like the bold fronts of Camdeboo that support the Sneuwberg, is composed of a number of horizontal strata of sandstone. In fact it may be considered as forming a part of the same ridge, being the most elevated line in the colony; this evidently appears from the different courses of the streams, that, rising out of its sides, flow from it towards every point of the compass. The great elevation of course renders it exceedingly cold during the winter months. Even in the beginning of May, and at the foot of the mountain, the thermometer was down to the freezing point for five succeeding mornings, and the whole surface of the country was covered with a white frost.

Leaving the Hantam, and proceeding south-easterly, I ascended the heights of Roggeveld, that are separated only from the former by a narrow chasm or opening. These heights are so called from a species of rye-grass that is found very plentifully in most of the hollows, and on which the cattle, during the summer season, in a great degree subsist. In some places the Roggeveld presents to the next lower terrace, which is the Bokkeveld and Karroo plains, perpendicular faces of stone from two to four thousand feet in height. Yet from this great elevation, on the eastern side, the descent is scarcely perceptible. The Fish river, whose course is easterly, and which rises on the very summit of the mountain, scarcely has any current, but is a series of deep holes connected by periodical streamlets.

The great inequality of the summit of the Roggeveld, gives it the appearance of a chain of mountains rising out of the general surface of a mountain. Of these the *Kom*, or Cup mountain, is the highest. According to the information of a neighbouring peasant, who assisted Colonel Gordon in determining its altitude, it is fifteen hundred feet higher than the Table mountain, or five thousand feet above the Karroo plains. For several months in the year the Roggeveld is entirely under snow; the inhabitants are then obliged to descend upon the Karroo with all their cattle, where, in temporary dwellings of rushes or straw, they remain till the spring. This division of Stellenbosch is considered to produce the best breed of horses in the whole colony.

The country to the eastward of the Roggeveld, is inhabited by different hordes of Bosjesmans.—One of these, called the *Koranas*, dwelling on the right bank of the Orange river, directly east from the Roggeveld, is represented as a very formidable tribe of people. The few that I had an opportunity of seeing, were strong lusty men, apparently of the same tribe as the Namaaquas. They are considered as being more cruel, and at the same time more daring than any other tribe of this nation.—They possess a few sheep and cattle, but have the same wandering inclination, and the same propensity to the chase, and to plunder, with the other Bosjesmans. The Briequa Kaffers, who inhabit the country close behind them, are very considerable sufferers from such daring neighbours. Of these people, the Koranas not only carry off large herds of cattle, but they also seize and make slaves of their children, some of whom have been brought into the colony, and purchased by the farmers in exchange for cattle. The Briequas, with their hassa-

gais, have little chance of standing against poisoned arrows. The shields too of the Koranas are enormously large, and so thick that the hassagai cannot penetrate them. I saw one made from the hide of an eland, that measured six feet by four. These people make regular attacks, in large parties of four or five hundred. Though very good friends among each other while poor, from the moment they have obtained by plunder a quantity of cattle, they begin to quarrel about the division of the spoil; and they are said to carry this sometimes to such an excess, that they continue to fight and massacre till, like the soldiers of Cadmus, very few remain in the field,

"—— suoque
"Marte cadunt subiti per mutua vulnera fratres."

The miserable bad roads, the nakedness of the country, and the very few animals that are found in a state of nature, upon the Roggeveld mountain, make it a disagreeable, uninteresting, and tedious route, for one who travels with no other view than that of gratifying curiosity. Crows, kites, and vultures, are almost the only kinds of birds that are met with. Of the last I broke the wing of one of that species called by Ornithologists the Condor, of an amazing large size. The spread of its wings was ten feet and one inch. It kept three dogs for some time completely at bay, and having at length seized one of them with its claws, and torn away a large piece of flesh from its thigh, they all immediately retreated.

Having proceeded for twelve days along the summit of the Roggeveld, till I fell in nearly with the track that had carried me on a former journey to Graaff Reynet, I descended to the Karroo plains,

which, in this part, employed me three days in crossing. These plains are every where of the same nature, presenting to the traveller "a scene of dreadful uniformity; where a barren level is bounded only by the horizon; where no change of prospect, or variety of images, relieves the traveller from a sense of toil and danger; of whirlwinds, which, in a moment, may bury him in the sand; and of thirst, which the wealthy have given half their possessions to allay."

Bordering these arid plains, on the west side, are several clumps of high mountains, inclosing meadows and vallies, covered with good grass, that are also called the Bokkeveld, but distinguished from the other by the names of Little Bokkeveld and Cold Bokkeveld. These the ramifications of the Great Chain mentioned in the former part of this chapter; and the vallies and meadows within them appear to have been the beds of lakes, in which there still remains a number of springs and swamps, that never fail to furnish a copious supply of water in the very driest seasons. The ground is productive of good grass, and yields abundant harvests. The cold in winter obliges the inhabitants to drive their cattle upon the Karroo plains, but not to quit their houses, as is the case with those of the Roggeveld.

On the twenty-seventh of May I repassed the great chain of mountains, through a ravine called the Eland's kloof. Here once more I had an opportunity of contemplating the venerable ruins that lay scattered around, strongly displaying the havoc of old Time. The road over this part of the mountains was much better than I had any reason to expect from the representations of the peasantry. Indeed at this time it was much the best of the four passes through which I had now crossed this great range of mountains.

The Olifant's river runs along the feet of the great chain on the west side, and is hemmed in between it and a parallel range of high hills, called the *Kardouw*. From one of these issues a plentiful spring of chalybeate water, of the temperature of 108° of Fahrenheit's thermometer. The Dutch government caused a house to be erected at this place for the accommodation of such as might be inclined to use the waters, but, like all the public buildings of the colony, it has been suffered to go out of repair.

On the west side of the Kardouw lies the division of the Four-and-twenty Rivers, extending from thence to the banks of the Berg river. This part of the country to the sea shore, including Zwartland, consists of a flat extended plain, very fertile in corn, grass, and fruits, and being well watered, is more populous than most parts of the colony. With a proper degree of labour and management in the culture of the land, by plantations and inclosures for shelter, warmth, and moisture, that part of the colony alone which lies within the great range of mountains, would be fully sufficient to supply with all the necessaries of life the town and garrison of the Cape, and all the shipping that will probably ever frequent its ports. In the introductory chapter, the probability was mentioned of the different foreign articles in the vegetable kingdom, of general consumption, that were most likely to succeed in this country. Since that was writen, several of such articles have had a fair trial in the Botanic garden at the Cape, and many of them have fully answered the expectations that were formed. As food for cattle, four species of millet have been tried of the genus, *Holcus*, namely, the *Sorghum*, the *Saccharatus*, the *Spicatus*, and *Bicolor*. All of these, except the spicatus, have been cut down several times in the same season, afterwards grew to the height

of six or ten feet, bore a plentiful crop of seed, sprung up afresh from the old stumps in the winter, furnishing most excellent food for cattle throughout the whole year. A species of Indian Lucerne, the *Medicago esculenta*, was twice cut down, and afterwards gave a plentiful crop of seed. A small kidney bean, the *Phaseolus lobatus*, grew very rapidly, producing two crops the same season, and is an excellent species of food for cattle, whether given to them green, or dried into hay, which is the case also with the lucerne. A strong tall dog's-tail-grass, the *Cynosurus coracanus* of India, useful both for man and beast, was cut down twice and afterwards produced a crop of seed. Of this species of grass horses are extravagantly fond, and it will remain green nearly through the winter. The encouragement of the culture of all these would be of the greatest importance to the interest of the colony. The *Sesamum* plant promises very fair to become useful in giving a supply of vegetable oil for the table, an article that is at present very much wanted in the Cape. Tea, coffee, and sugar, might all be cultivated with success. But that which in a commercial point of view is likely hereafter to render the colony of the Cape most valuable to the state on which it may be dependent, is the facility with which the cultivation of the different kinds of hemp for cordage and canvass, may be carried on to an unlimited extent. The *Cannabis sativa*, or common hemp, has been long planted here as a substitute for tobacco, but the idea was never extended to make it useful in any other way. It grows to a sort of branching shrub, losing entirely that habit of springing up in a single stem as it always appears in Europe; this, however, is entirely owing to its being planted singly. When sown thick on the ground as in Europe, it grows exactly in the same manner, ascends to about the height of eight feet, and gives

to all appearance a fibre of equal strength and tenacity of that where it is usually cultivated, and it requires very little trouble in keeping clean on the ground. The different plants of India, that are generally cultivated there for the purposes of hemp, have been found to grow here, as well in every respect as in their native soil. Of these the most common are the *Robinia cannabina*, giving a durable fibre in the water, and on that account used in the east for fishing-nets and tackle. The Jute of India, *Corchorus olitorius*, thrives very well, as does also the *Hibiscus cannabinus*, whose leaves of a delicate subacid taste serve as a sallad for the table, and the fibres of the stem are manufactured into cordage. A native species of hibiscus that I brought from the vicinity of Plettenberg's bay, yields a hemp of an excellent quality, little perhaps superior to that of the cannabis, or common hemp, which is most unquestionable the best material yet discovered for the manufacture of strong cordage. The *Janap* of India, *Crotularia Juncea*, from which a strong coarse stuff is manufactured under the name of *Gunney*, seems to thrive very well in the climate of the Cape. Cotton and indigo may both be produced in any quantity in this colony; but the labour necessary in the preparation of the latter, and the enormous price of slaves, or the hire of free workmen, would scarcely be repaid to the cultivator. That species of cotton plant called the *hirsutum* seems to sustain the south-east blasts of wind with the least degree of injury; but the Bourbon cotton, originally from the West Indies, will thrive just as well in the interior parts of the country where the south-easters extend not with that degree of strength so as to cause any injury to vegetation. Most of the India and China fruits, that have yet been brought into the garden, seem to bid fair for success. In short, there is not, perhaps, in the whole world,

a place so well adapted for concentrating the various products of the vegetable kingdom, as the Southern angle of Africa.

Crossing the Berg river, I entered Zwartland, where, in consequence of a shower of rain, the inhabitants were busily employed in ploughing the ground, which the long drought this year had hitherto prevented them from entering. In this division there is no scarcity of water in springs or wells, but it is universally, and so strongly, impregnated with salt, as not only to be disagreeable, but almost impossible to be taken by those who have not been long accustomed to it. By such it is preferred to the purest water; this being accounted insipid and tasteless. An old man in the Bokkeveld, who, from his infancy till a few years past, had lived in Zwartland, never missed an opportunity of sending thither a few bottles to be filled with the briny water for his own particular use; the pure stream of the mountain, as he asserted, not being able to quench his thirst. Similar instances of habit, or of fancy, appear in an ancient history. Some of the princesses of the Ptolemy family would drink no other water but that of the Nile, though it is sometimes so strongly impregnated with nitrous and other salts, as to possess a purgative quality; and superstition directed the same water to be carried from Egypt into Syria and Greece, for the sole purpose of sprinkling in the temple of Isis.

Leaving Zwartland, and its saline springs to those who could relish them, I directed my route across the Tiger berg to the Cape, where I arrived on the second of June, without having experienced any of those inconveniences which the season of the year seemed to threaten.

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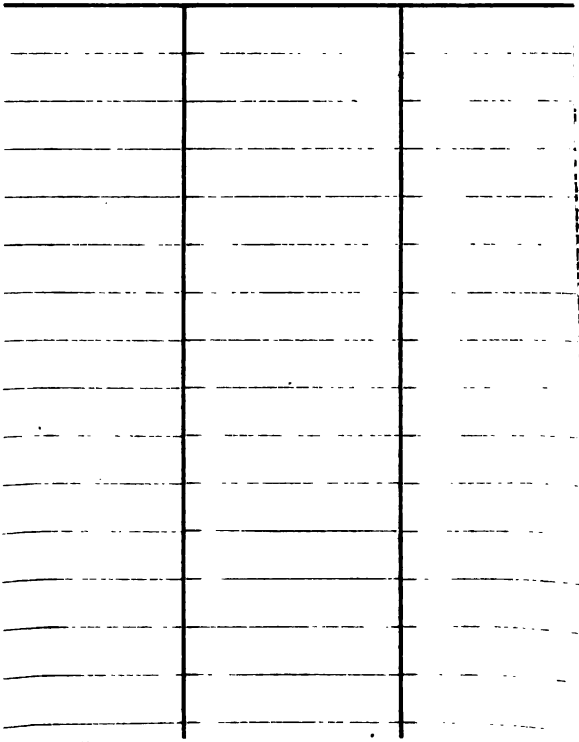

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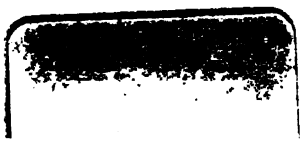
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